

Which CARIBBEAN ISLAND are you? P.30

Win a
FREE
Wedding!
P.10

DESTINATION WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS

25

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BUNGALOWS

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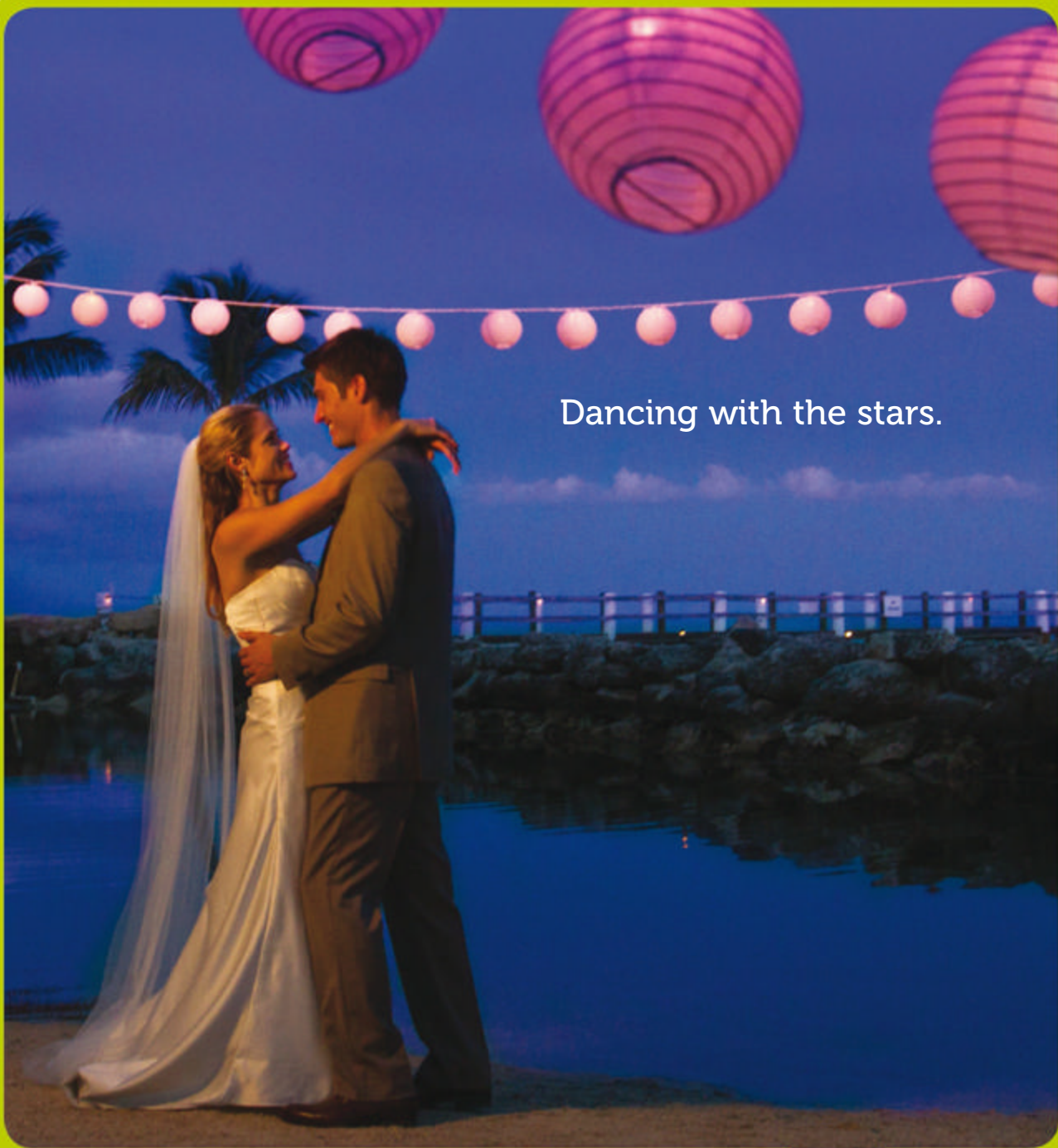
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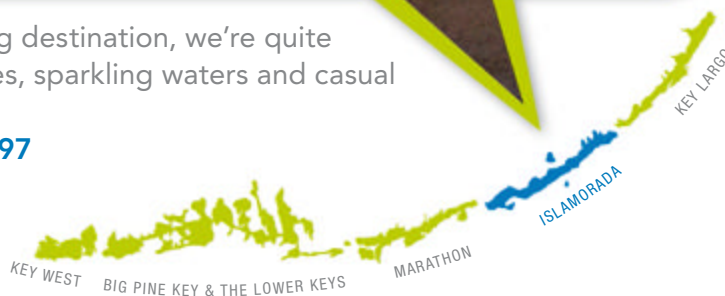


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March/April 2015 ➔

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Dreaming of a Tahiti honeymoon in a private villa over a crystal lagoon? Of course you are. Swoon over six pages of Tahiti's best resorts, plus 15 more heavenly overwater spots worldwide.

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DESTINATION WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS

March/April 2015

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editor's *letter*

Tahiti or Bust

If there's one place always topping lists of the most romantic destinations, it's the Islands of Tahiti. Which got us thinking: Wouldn't it be amazing to shoot a Tahiti cover? Fast-forward past a zillion planning calls and emails (some in French!), and our crew was on their way to the South Pacific. Art director Vicky Hodges shares about the experience:

"I never believed those pictures on the Tahiti web-sites were actually real. I can spot Photoshopping a mile off, so I assumed they'd just gone overboard with it. Until we arrived. It's a good thing our job was to take pictures because it's crazy-hard to put your camera down in Tahiti. The lush mountains. The bronze bodies. The ridiculously turquoise water. It has to be seen to be believed. And that's before you even step inside your overwater bungalow. From the InterContinental to the Four Seasons, they're all magnificent. And did I mention the water?"

Turn to p. 58 for the skinny on booking your own overwater bungalow (one is as low as \$270 per night!). But if you're dreaming of escaping to Spain, Saint Lucia or even sunny California, we've got ideas for you too (The Ever After, p. 67).

And as always, we've curated loads of wedding advice, from how to marry in Grand Cayman (p. 23) to planning time lines whether your I do's are in one month or one year (p. 50).

Wherever your wedding and honeymoon take you, take a few minutes to drool over our Tahiti feature — we promise, the eye candy won't disappoint.



Erika

ERIKA HUENEKE
Editor-in-Chief

ON OUR COVER

Our cover was shot on location at Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora in the Islands of Tahiti. Travel provided by Air Tahiti Nui.

PHOTOGRAPHY JON WHITTLE

HAIR & MAKEUP AURÉLIE CARON – BRIDAL BEAUTY

MODELS FASHION-MODELS TAHITI

ON BERINGER GOWN Love Marley Dress Penelope A-line gown (style 53707) with soft netting, hand-placed lace motifs on bodice, illusion neckline, plunging back neckline and sweep train, contact nearest retailer for pricing, watters.com **NECKLACE** Letizia B Jewelry Tahitian mother-of-pearl choker necklace with pink crystals and white mother of pearl, \$140, letiziabjewelry.com **FLOWER CROWN** Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora, price on request, fourseasons.com/borabora **ON TAPIVA SHIRT** Perry Ellis solid linen shirt, \$69.50, perryellis.com **PANTS** Perry Ellis slim-fit dress pant, \$79.50, perryellis.com **LEI** Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora, price on request, fourseasons.com/borabora



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DESTINATION WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS

Q: What Caribbean island are you?

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 FRANCOPHILE, BUT STILL
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 BACK DISPOSITION.

JAMAICA! BETWEEN THE
 MUSIC, THE VIBE, THE BEACHES
 — IT'S ALL-AROUND COOL.

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 AND PEOPLE LIKE IT!

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I CAN BE ADVENTUROUS OR DO
 NOTHING AT ALL. SO I THINK **SAINT**
LUCIA IS MY CARIBBEAN QUEEN.

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It's more than its cosmopolitan flair, fascinating cultural heritage or the fact that it is surrounded by crystal-clear waters that makes Puerto Rico the wedding destination of choice for so many of today's betrothed. The All-Star Island is simply made for celebrating love. It offers varied destination wedding styles — historical, contemporary, beach, country, intimate or sophisticated. With a range of romantic venues, Puerto Rico boasts centuries-old forts, intimate antique churches, majestic mountains, pristine beaches, small inns or five-star resorts with celebrity chefs to host your perfect day. Marry in and around historic Old San Juan or head off for the beauty beyond it, from a casual tropical or a country feel to total luxury, whether you head south, east or to the west coast.

There simply is no limit to your dream wedding in Puerto Rico. If you're looking to infuse a cultural feel during your big day, opt for one of the many Spanish Colonial venues, such as Casa de España in San Juan and Castillo Serrallés in Ponce. If you'd rather have magnificent white sand at your feet and the Caribbean Sea or Atlantic Ocean as a backdrop, there are many beachfront resorts that specialize in weddings in varying budget categories. Luscious rainforests, majestic caves, world-class museums, historic castles and forts are just some of the options for a couple looking for really out-of-the-ordinary settings. All exotic ... but hassle-free!

Puerto Rico is easy to get to with nonstop and very competitively priced flights from numerous destinations in the United States, Canada, Spain and Colombia to main airports in San Juan, Aguadilla and Ponce. Plus, the true convenience of no passport needed for U.S. citizens traveling to Puerto Rico is an important criterion for your choice of destination setting; it is most certainly a cost savings on travel and offers peace of mind if you want to add on some guests closer to the big day.

The marriage license requirements are as easy as those of your home state. See the box to the right for details on what paperwork is needed, but there is no need to worry as most resorts have on-site wedding coordinators. The Puerto Rico Tourism Company also has a list of endorsed wedding coordinators who can work with you to plan both ceremony and reception. Everything you dreamed of for your wedding can be arranged in Puerto Rico stress-free, including lush tropical flowers, photography, videography and more. Plus, Puerto Rico is the foodie capital of the Caribbean, so your reception is certain to impress all your guests.

ISLAND EXPLORATION

Prewedding and postwedding, friends and family can enjoy an endless list of activities. Plan a walking tour along the cobblestone-lined streets of Old San Juan where you can stroll hand in hand with your true love and your

loved ones past architectural gems, including two of the oldest churches in the Americas and the 16th-century citadel El Morro. Take the group to a coffee- or rum-tasting experience at a specialty boutique. Stop along the way and dine on authentic Puerto Rican favorites bursting with a mix of Spanish, African and Indian flavors or a wide choice of international cuisines in one of the top restaurants in Old San Juan or nearby trendy Condado. And afterward, enjoy the sizzling nightlife, from salsa dancing to trendy bars and vibrant casinos.

Set aside a day of pampering in a resort spa or head out for time on the links at one of Puerto Rico's more than 20 championship golf courses. If your guests enjoy being active, organize an excursion that has everyone night kayaking on a bioluminescent bay, hiking through El Yunque National Forest, ziplining through the mountains, or exploring the Camuy Caves. Kick off the night with a sunset cruise on Caribbean waters, followed by time in the casino or nightclub. You can even set up salsa lessons for the bridal party so they are ready to take over the dance floor during the reception.

Ready for more ideas? The Puerto Rico Tourism Company loves to hear from couples! Visit seepuertorico.com to start planning your All-Star Island wedding in Puerto Rico or call 1-800-866-7827 for information. Also, like See Puerto Rico on Facebook to stay up-to-date on all the destination buzz. The wedding of your dreams can easily be on its way. 🌴

THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Destination weddings in Puerto Rico are so popular that the Demographic Registrar's Office, which issues marriage licenses in Puerto Rico, opened a new customer service office exclusively to handle them. Your wedding coordinator or a representative from the Puerto Rico Tourism Company can help set up an appointment with the Demographic Registrar's Office once you arrive on the island. Both the bride and the groom must be present at that appointment.

Documentation required of U.S. citizens includes medical certificates that show that you both comply with tests required for marriage in your place of residence, valid for a period of 10 days from their issuance; government-issued photo IDs; birth certificates; and if you are divorced or widowed, a copy of the corresponding official documents is necessary. There are no residency requirements, but nonresidents must submit an affidavit or sworn statement that stipulates that the sole purpose of your visit is to marry. Set up an appointment with the Demographic Registrar's Office through the Puerto Rico Tourism Company by calling 1-800-866-7827.

a



traveler review

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Destination Wedding

This was the perfect location for our wedding. The backdrop is so gorgeous - the sunset, the lush greenery and the beach! The wedding was absolutely gorgeous - take your breath away gorgeous. The reception was so much fun. Everything was top-notch as far as food and service throughout the entire stay. If you are also looking for a beach wedding location, I highly recommend this place. **WE ARE ALREADY PLANNING ON GOING BACK NEXT YEAR FOR OUR ANNIVERSARY!**

Puerto Rico is not only an island with whimsical scenery and magical weather. It's a five star world-class wedding destination that will make this unique occasion an unforgettable event.

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WHAT'S NEW AND NEXT IN THE WORLD OF WEDDINGS AWAY

pick the date



WEATHER ||| VALUE ||| EVENTS

Easter

Celebrate Easter in **ARGENTINA** with Rosca de Pascua (a special Easter cake), barbecue and treasure hunts organized by local governments.

Take part in a **WASHINGTON, D.C.**, tradition since 1878 — Easter-egg rolling on the White House lawn.

After a 40-day fast, the **GREEK ORTHODOX** knock eggs with their neighbors for good fortune.

This spring, PANTONE's soft hues take their cues from nature. Couples who covet clean style will love these palettes, paired with wedding hot spots.

SPRING SOIREE

PLAN YOUR PARTY DURING EASTER AND CARNIVAL FOR FESTIVITIES GALORE.

More than 1 million visitors flock to Nice, **FRANCE**, for its Carnival celebration, including burlesque floats and a flower parade.

In **QUEBEC**, Carnival brings together the communities of Laval and Montreal through music, dance and traditional costumes.

Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, most famously feted in **NEW ORLEANS**, refers to Carnival celebrations between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday.

Carnival

*PANTONE 2015 COLOR OF THE YEAR

Life of the Party

A LOOK AT SPRING-BREAK VISITORS IN TOP LOCALES, WHETHER YOUR WEDDING STYLE IS LIVELY OR CHILL.

CAYMAN ISLANDS >> 34K

KAUAI, HAWAII >> 93K

THE BAHAMAS >> 153K

PUERTO RICO >> 156K

GALVESTON, TEXAS >> 250K

PANAMA CITY BEACH, FLORIDA >> 250K

MAUI, HAWAII >> 219K

CANCUN, MEXICO >> 205K

JAMAICA >> 339K

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC >> 439K

MYRTLE BEACH, SC >> 1.4M** **ESTIMATED AVERAGES OF COMBINED MARCH/APRIL VISITORS.

by CHARYN PFEUFFER

now
arriving

HAPPENINGS

GROUNDBREAKING

SAY I DO AT ONE OF THESE NEWLY MINTED WEDDING RESORTS.

One of the best hotels in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, just got better:

Azul Fives Hotel by Karisma (below) completed a \$40 million expansion in January 2015, including 64

suites and three

restaurants. The resort's Sky Weddings rooftop venue is perfect for big bashes.

... **Wyndham Grand Jupiter At Harbourside**

Place opened in

Florida in October 2014. Book the Preserve Ballroom with the adjoining Mangrove Deck for a posh party. ... A duo of resorts is debuting in the \$3.5 billion Bahamas development, Baha Mar, in spring 2015.

Grand Hyatt at Baha Mar will feature a 29,500-square-foot ballroom,

and **Rosewood at Baha Mar**

(left) will offer a private beach for the I do's.

... Premiered in December 2014, **Gansevoort Dominican Republic**

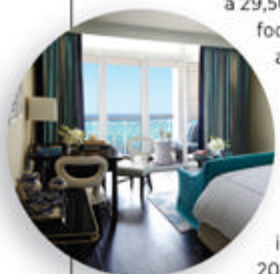
is the luxury-hotel group's second island resort. The boutique features 48 suites, a tiered cascading infinity pool and buzz-worthy restaurant Baia Lounge. ... As if Bali weren't already a dream wedding locale,

AYANA Resort and Spa (left) unveiled the open-air

SKY wedding deck, perched on a cliff top 115 feet above the Indian Ocean, in August 2014.

— Allyson

Reedy



The Next Thailand

CAMBODIA

HISTORY AND CULTURE ARE FRONT AND CENTER IN THIS SOUTHEAST ASIA ENCLAVE.

The vibe ➤ Everything Thailand has — beautiful beaches, ancient temples, exotic food — Cambodia has, too, without the throngs of tourists (yet). Emerging from its shadowed past, the Kingdom of Cambodia is set for big growth. With Phnom Penh's winding markets, Siem Reap's French quarter and the Koh Rong peninsula's crystal waters, marrying in Cambodia comes with serious bragging rights.

Where to wed ➤ Opened in 1932, **Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor** in the city of Siem Reap is just

30 minutes from Angkor Wat, the largest temple complex in the world. The 119-room hotel flaunts French-colonial flair, with draped four-poster beds and views out to the country's largest swimming pool. Wed in the Royal Garden, and host your reception in the onsite Restaurant Le Grand, showcasing traditional Khmer cuisine like fish curry and beef *lok lak* stir fry. For real wow factor, marry in front of Angkor Wat's main temple, and make your grand exit by elephant. *Rooms from \$275; weddings custom.*



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AZUL FIVES HOTEL BY KARISMA; COURTESY RAFFLES SIEM REAP; COURTESY BELMOND; SHUTTERSTOCK; COURTESY CASTELLO DI MONTERONE; SHUTTERSTOCK (4); D'SOLEIL PHOTOGRAPHY VANCOUVER (3); COURTESY AYANA RESORT AND SPA; COURTESY ROSEWOOD HOTELS & RESORTS

Wedding Report

JUST-ANNOUNCED BIG-DAY OFFERINGS FOR JET-SETTERS.

1 FINE ART IN MEXICO ➤ Grand Velas Resorts in Riviera Maya and Riviera Nayarit have partnered with Antología by Fornari to offer couples live-painted wedding portraits, a centuries-old tradition of European aristocracy.



Italy Mania

George Clooney, Kanye West and Neil Patrick Harris are off the market, but their 2014 Italian nuptials put The Boot on the map. Here's how to throw a bellissima wedding VIP-style.



1

VENICE CELEB SOIREE

In September, Clooney and Amal Alamuddin threw a star-studded wedding in the City of Light. The couple chose **Belmond Hotel Cipriani** for the rehearsal dinner and bachelor party, and **Aman Canal Grande Venice** for the bachelorette party and main event.

IDEA TO STEAL

The island's wooden water taxis ushered all of Clooney and Alamuddin's guests between venues, but a grand exit à deux via boat is an equally paparazzi-worthy moment.

REAL-WORLD PRICE

Belmond Hotel Cipriani rooms from \$766; reception menus from \$235 per person. Aman Canal Grande Venice rooms from \$1,473; site fees from \$2,063.



2

FLORENCE CELEB SOIREE

Kimye rented Forte di Belvedere, a 16th-century fortress with a history of hosting the Medici family, for their May nuptials. Reportedly, their guests stayed at Renaissance-palace-cum-hotel **The Westin Excelsior**, which grants views of the Florence Cathedral.

IDEA TO STEAL

The Wests proved the photo-booth trend is going strong, posing with guests in full duck face. Change it up with a slow-mo video booth, animated gifs or a "light-paint party."

REAL-WORLD PRICE

The Westin Excelsior rooms from \$294; food and beverage from \$112 per person.



3

PERUGIA CELEB SOIREE

NPH and David Burtka exchanged intimate I do's on Sept. 6 at a private castle in central Italy. Want a similar vibe? **Castello di Monterone**, an 18-room country-side castle that dates to the 13th century, offers gardens and a medieval court for wedding celebrations.



IDEA TO STEAL

The couple surprised guests with a fireworks display, which isn't as expensive as you might think — "about \$3,700 for 10 minutes," says Brenda Babcock of Italia Celebrations.

REAL-WORLD PRICE

Castello di Monterone rooms from \$159, including buffet breakfast and use of the sauna and steam bath; reception menus from \$112 per person. — Erika Hueneker



2 SOMETHING BLUE IN NORTH CAROLINA

➤ A 1917 Cadillac convertible gives couples who marry at Asheville's Omni Grove Park Inn a stylish ride around town — and their something blue.

3 POETIC LICENSE IN ARUBA ➤ At

the Radisson Aruba Resort, all newlyweds leave with a traditional Aruban license plate personalized with their wedding date and the locale's "One Happy Island" slogan.

4 SQUEAKY CLEAN IN THE CARIBBEAN

AND MEXICO ➤ Trash the dress at a Rosewood Hotel & Resort (such as Jumby Bay in Antigua), and staff will clean, restore and preserve the gown following the shoot.

now
arriving

WAKE UP YOUR GUESTS ➤ Add a jolt of java to your welcome bags with world-famous Kona coffee grown only on the Big Island. Why is it so special? The beans are planted in volcanic soil, and the perfect conditions make for a perfect cup. See for yourself with one of the free plantation tours (no group-size limit) at Greenwell Coffee Farms.

1



5 THINGS WE love



2

RECEPTION = DINNER AND A SHOW ➤ In addition to pulsing drums, hula dancers and fire performers, **Legends of Hawaii, Our Big Island Story** luau at **Hilton Waikoloa Village** serves Polynesian fare like kalua pig, poi and mai tais. The regular show (Tuesdays, Fridays, Sundays) can accommodate a hefty guest list, but parties of 60 or more can book a private luau.

HAWAII THE BIG ISLAND

This diverse isle — one of TripAdvisor's U.S. Destinations on the Rise — brims with rich culture and cinematic scenery.



4

A SUNSET CEREMONY IS A SNAP ➤ The best sunset views (and desserts — don't miss the s'mores-inspired Baked Mauna Kea) can be found at Hilton Waikoloa Village's **Kamuela Provision Company**. Wed overlooking the crashing waves and a swath of orange sky, and host your reception steps away on the restaurant's stone terrace.



3

YOU WON'T BELIEVE THE PHOTO OPS ➤ Got a group? Head to **Akaka Falls** for an easy self-guided hike with a big payoff. Just you and your beau? Book a tour with **Blue Hawaiian Helicopters**, where aerial views — from waterfalls to the rugged Kona coast — rival any scene from *Avatar*.

ADVENTURE IS ALWAYS ERUPTING ➤ A twilight tour in **Hawaii Volcanoes National Park** and a peek into the lava lake of Halemaumau Crater are musts. **Hawaii Forest and Trail's** guides will show you (and up to 12 guests) the highlights. — *Cami Webb*



5

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SHUTTERSTOCK; JAMES RUBIO PHOTOGRAPHY; COURTESY HILTON WAIKOLOA VILLAGE; COURTESY BLUE HAWAIIAN HELICOPTERS; RUSS BISHOP/ALAMY; JAMES RUBIO PHOTOGRAPHY



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inside

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the *plan*



OUR GUIDE TO PLANNING A
WEDDING IN THIS TROPICAL EDEN

how to marry in **GRAND CAYMAN**



CAYMAN IMAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: LAURA GRIER OF BEAUTIFUL DAY PHOTOGRAPHY; REBECCA DAVIDSON PHOTOGRAPHY (REBECCADAVIDSON.COM); ZACH STOVALL; AARON REBARCHEK (AARONREBARCHEK.COM); BURRARD-LUCAS.COM; COURTESY CAYMAN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM; AARON REBARCHEK (AARONREBARCHEK.COM); PASSPORT & LOCK; VINE & LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY (VINEANDLIGHT.COM)

by ERIKA HUENEKE



Taking the plunge at Smith Cove. RIGHT: In Cayman, you can count on sunshine, Caybrew beer and time on the water. OPPOSITE: A bird's-eye view of Seven Mile Beach. PREVIOUS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A photo sesh on the sea. Turquoise is a popular wedding color at The Westin Grand Cayman. A cozy cabana at The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman. A tropical cake by Mise en Place catering. Posing with a pair of local lagers. Cayman's famed stingrays. Tropical tunes and blooms add an island feel.

The Details

LOCAL COLOR

INFUSE YOUR EVENT WITH TRUE CAYMAN FLAIR.

WELCOME BAGS

"The best Caymanian items for welcome bags are Cayman Sea Salt, Cayman Gourmet Pepper Jelly, Seven Fathoms Rum, Tortuga rum cakes, Caybrew beer, Cayman Taffy Co. water taffy, and Cayman Scents hand-made candles and soaps." — Jo Anne Brown of Celebrations



FOOD

"Cayman conch fritters are very popular. For a casual welcome or rehearsal dinner, barbecue and roast pig are great, especially when served jerk-style or with Caribbean sides such as rice and peas or festival (fried dumplings)." — Brown

PHOTOGRAPHY

"Allow 45 minutes to an hour after the ceremony for family pictures and couple portraits before the sun sets. It's also the cooler part of the day. Seven Mile Beach is the best spot as it faces west. For rock-the-frock sessions (aka trash-the-dress), I recommend jumping off the pier at Rum Point or the limestone 'cliffs' at Smith Cove." — Janet Jarchow of Better Angle Photography



Just 22 miles long, this coral outcrop still registers on the romance radar. Forbes named it the “world’s friendliest country,” and past visitors include Tom Cruise and the Queen of England (the Cayman Islands are a British territory). Plus, Grand Cayman has arguably the highest caliber of wedding vendors in the entire region. Read on for how to pull off your event in this Caribbean gem.

WHERE TO STAY

The Westin Grand Cayman Seven Mile Beach Resort & Spa occupies the widest stretch of Seven Mile Beach, Cayman’s claim to fame (which is really just 5.5 miles, but who’s counting?). The resort is also home to the island’s largest freshwater swimming pool — and a nightly happy hour with drink specials and live music. Swap vows in the white beachfront gazebo, then keep the party going in the courtyard, on the beach terrace or in one of two ballrooms. Then it’s back to the beach for an epic bonfire with s’mores. Don’t be shy about special requests: The Westin has even supplied live mermaids for one wedding celebration. *Rooms from \$199; weddings from \$1,250.*

The five-star grand dame of Seven Mile Beach, The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman played host to the 2010 nuptials of Los Angeles Dodgers shortstop Jimmy Rollins, who chose the resort’s wedding pavilion on the Great Lawn. Receptions can take place in the ballroom or at the Harbour Club. Or hold the entire event on the sand, with food stations, steel drums and fireworks. In their downtime, guests can splash in the sea with myriad water toys, including floating sun beds and “aqua lounge” tables. *Rooms from \$469; weddings from \$3,255.*

Experience a different side of Cayman by making The Reef Resort, in the quieter East End area, home base. The hotel offers

a laundry list of family-friendly perks:

All-inclusive pricing is available, and all 152 casual rooms are beachfront and feature a fridge, a microwave and a patio or balcony. Welcome guests at the colorful Rusty Pelican beach bar with frosty mudslide



quick hits

LANGUAGE >> English **AVERAGE TEMP** >> 75–85° F **FLOWER** >> wild banana orchid **CURRENCY** >> \$1CI = \$1.25USD **BEST WEDDING MONTHS** >> November–June **NICKNAME** >> Cayman (not The Caymans)

cocktails, invented in the ’50s at nearby Rum Point. Most ceremonies take place on the 1,600-foot beach, but the dock is another pretty option. Then host a sit-down dinner in Pelican’s Reef Restaurant. *Rooms from \$103; wedding packages from \$2,495.*

WHERE TO PLAY

Grand Cayman’s must-do group activity is a Red Sail Sports catamaran sail to Stingray City, a sandbar where wild stingrays come to score a meal from the local tour operators doling out squid. Score Instagram-worthy photo ops, plus stingray hickies. Cayman’s other famous resident is the blue iguana, the most endangered iguana on earth. Spy the blue beasts roaming Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park; a portion of the cost goes toward funding the Blue Iguana Recovery Program. Welcome guests at the Camana Bay development with its Flavor Tour — a progressive dinner that includes six stops (each with a cocktail) and four “tastes” at the complex’s marquee restaurants.

WHERE TO PARTY

Grand Cayman offers several restaurants that cater to reception feasts, such as Luca and The Wharf. Topping the list is Grand Old House, dating to 1908 and perched on the waterfront just five minutes from George Town, the island’s capital. Say I do on the expansive open-air deck, then nosh on bacon-wrapped wahoo with shrimp risotto, or seafood curry featuring the catch of the day. Other offbeat venues include the great house and oceanfront grounds of Pedro St. James National Historic Site; the Sunset Bay event venue; and private rental homes like Sun Salutations and Villa Zara.

FLOWERS

“Flowers are imported to Grand Cayman from all over the world, from Costa Rica all the way to Holland, so the choices are wide and varied. Orchids are a very popular choice. For a local touch, we love the rustic look using island greenery such as sea grapes and sea-grape leaves.” — Brown

CAKE

“A lot of couples ask for teal and coral cakes to maximize the tropical feel of the island. For flavor, we get requests like mango, pineapple, Key lime or vanilla with guava filling. In this hot climate, your cake designer should be able to produce a fondant or buttercream cake that can be displayed outside for at least two hours without melting.” — Lori-Ann Foley of The Cake Studio

MUSIC

“I mix island sounds with country, pop and my originals. For something a bit softer, consider the Hi Tide duo or harpist Eugenio Leon. A few good steel-drum players are available for Caribbean flavor.” — George Nowak of The Barefoot Man and Band

STYLING

“Between the breeze and high humidity, updos are perfect for a beach ceremony — curls seldom last past the vows. Also, allow time for your makeup to set before leaving the air conditioning. And remember: When you’re catching some rays before the big day for that sunny glow, go with a strapless bikini top!” — Jarchow





Pro Tips

FOR YOUR TRIP

DOES THE FIANCÉ NOT WANT TO LUG HIS SUIT IN A SUITCASE?
OUR EXPERTS ANSWER THIS AND OTHER BIG-DAY-AWAY QUERIES.

by HOLLY V. KAPHERR

QUESTION → Can I rent or buy men's attire at the destination instead of bringing it all the way from our hometown?

THE PRO Chicago-based planner Ali Phillips has planned wedding weekends in Turks and Caicos, Grand Cayman and other far-flung locales.

“It's convenient for the men to not have to travel with a suit or tuxedo — not to mention there's no worrying about lost baggage. But before committing to a menswear game plan, check in and around your wedding location to ensure that what you're looking for as far as styles — whether it's tux and tails or khakis and linen shirts — is available and reserved, so that when the men arrive, they can all go pick up and try on their clothes right away. Check with the hotel or surrounding area to see if a tailor is available for onsite alterations if necessary. If the guys are traveling with their attire, ask your hotel what services it offers for pressing or steaming in case the attire gets wrinkled en route.”

QUESTION → How can I negotiate with vendors from afar? What kinds of deals, discounts or bartering can I expect?

THE PRO Based in Washington, D.C., Christine Godsey of Engaging Affairs has been creating elegant destination weddings in the continental U.S. and the Caribbean since 1996.

“There are a couple of ways to up your bargaining power right off the bat: Offering to pay the entire amount upfront is a good way to score discounted rates from vendors, as is paying cash instead of with a credit card. Finding vendors who offer packages that include multiple services (like a DJ who also offers special lighting, one stylist for both hair and make-up, or a florist who also has an inventory of event rentals) is also a way to get discounts based on the amount of services you bundle. The more services you book with that person or company, the better negotiating power you have. Beyond that, booking your wedding during an off- or shoulder season drives down prices, as does marrying on a weekday or a Sunday in many locales.”




QUESTION → *If we're using a travel agent to book flights, choose a hotel and arrange excursions during our wedding, how will our planner and travel agent work together?*

THE PRO Sarah Pease, the engine behind Brilliant Event Planning, has been designing weddings in Mexico and the Caribbean since 2008.

“As I always say, ‘Put your aces in their places’ — let each person do what he or she is great at. Travel agents are trained to book flights and excursions; a wedding planner is an expert at planning a wedding — so have each person focus on those areas. Hotels are the one area of overlap where the travel agent and the wedding planner will need to work together. For the main wedding hotel, where the bride and groom might stay and where the actual wedding will



take place, the travel agent should create a list of potential properties that fit the general requirements of the couple (location, number of rooms, pricing), and the wedding planner should narrow down the list based on the couple's wedding requirements (guest capacity, indoor/outdoor venues). Then both the travel agent and the wedding planner should work together to get the client the best contract. For any auxiliary hotels and room reservations, the travel agent should take the lead, but the wedding planner should be looped in to the process to consider transfers, invitation wording and welcome-gift delivery. From the start, if both your **wedding planner and travel agent** work on commissions, be sure to establish (or ask them to establish) how they will approach the hotel commission, since it's a joint project.”



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you settle down.

Get Hot & TIE THE KNOT

by JAKE EMEN artwork by IKER AYESTARÁN

➔ Bringing up your wife-to-be's size is a no-no, but she is probably already focused on slimming down for that slinky destination dress: 70 percent of women said they wanted to lose weight before their wedding, according to a Cornell University study. If you don't love your love handles either, then trade your six-pack for a six pack and get moving. Here's how to tackle prewedding poundage as a couple without driving each other nuts.

1 Don't cram ➔ "Losing weight shouldn't be a stressor on top of planning," says Thea Lund, a registered dietitian and clinical team lead for Cigna's Your Health First program. "Start at least six months before your wedding day." Her formula: Shave 500 calories a day off your diet — or burn them through exercise — to lose one pound per week.

2 Get sweaty together ➔ If you're at differing fitness levels, at least hit

the gym at the same time. And while the temptation might be to "spot train" your least-favorite areas, "the notion that you can lose weight in a specific area is a myth," says personal trainer and fitness author Sue Fleming. Instead, combine cardio with total-body strength training. Bonus: Exercise can also work wonders elsewhere (ahem), as several studies have linked it with increased libido.

3 Team up in the kitchen ➔

"Grocery shop and cook together," suggests Katie Boyd, personal trainer and owner of the Miss Fit Club, managing what you eat while enjoying more time together. Try these swaps for an instant nutritional overhaul: brown rice for white rice; spaghetti squash for pasta; whole-wheat English muffins for bagels; peanut butter for cream cheese; and plain Greek yogurt for sour cream or mayo. In the midst of engagement parties and rehearsal dinners at restaurants, Lund says, "Look for words

like grilled, steamed, baked or roasted," while avoiding "fried, crispy or creamy."

4 Be ready anywhere ➔ There will be days when appointments and follow-ups mean a 5K run won't happen. Instead, "Find one hour to fit some type of movement into your day," Fleming says. For bonus points, plan a double-duty date night and take your lady salsa dancing to work on your dance-floor moves — just watch those margaritas.

5 Make a game plan ➔ With prewedding tastings, dinners and parties filling the calendar, Lund's guidelines for dodging sabotage include moderation, watching alcohol intake, and planning balanced meals in advance of special outings. Remember to check in with each other — and to actually have fun along the way. "When you're enjoying the process together," says Boyd, "you'll see major progress and awesome results."



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ELEVEN JAMES

Club members enjoy luxury timepieces for two to four months at a time, so you can show off your swag from bachelor party to I do (from \$199/month). — Brooke Showell

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COUNTRY

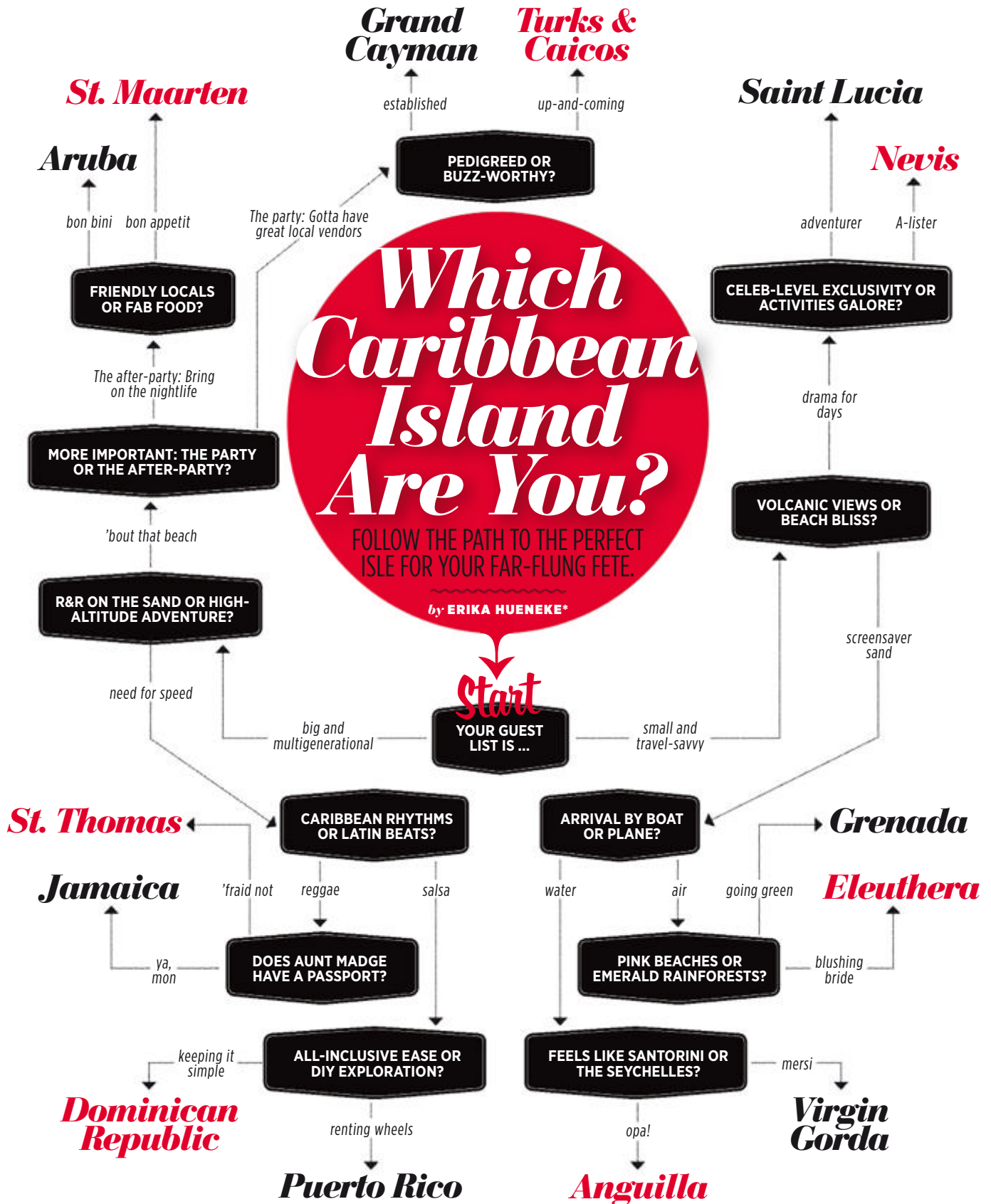
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UNDER \$10K

HOTEL RIU PALACE CABO SAN LUCAS

Located on action-packed Playa Medano, Riu Palace offers all the essentials for a wedding bash wrapped up in one affordable package. For the ceremony, the beach is the hands-down favorite. Six restaurants vie for the reception, but the grilled rack of lamb at Torote steakhouse is a standout. Afterward, keep the party going at the resort's Pacha *discoteca*. You'll even have room in your budget for a pro fireworks display. *Rooms from \$170, all-inclusive; weddings from \$3,000.*



\$10K TO \$20K

CASA NATALIA

Couples with a midrange budget and an itch for exclusivity can book just 14 of Casa Natalia's 19 rooms to have the whole hotel for their affair. Eight minutes away, Flora's Field Kitchen, an organic farm and celeb favorite (Adam Levine married there), is a sweet setting for the rehearsal dinner. Wed shaded in Casa Natalia's private garden, then fiesta at Mi Cocina Restaurant: Mariachis play while Chef Loic gets creative. *Rooms from \$155; weddings from \$250 per person.*



\$20K PLUS

PUEBLO BONITO PACIFICA RESORT

No need to deliberate over rooms at Pueblo Bonito Pacifica: All 147 suites flaunt an ocean view. After hitting bars like rock legend Sammy Hagar's Cabo Wabo, recover with a 'maids' spa day while the guys kick back at Quivira Golf Club. The resort's beach is ideal for I do's, with endearing touches like a baby-sea-turtle release. Celebrate poolside with "tequila shrimp" as the sun sets — *muy romantico*. *Rooms from \$472, all-inclusive; weddings from \$500 per person.* — Peter Zarella



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inside

INSPIRATION FOR YOUR AISLE STYLE

FLAT AND
FABULOUS **p42**



GIVING
THANKS **p40**



the *look*



MORE THAN A FEELING

Which words best describe how you want your wedding to feel?

A survey by wedding-research firm Splendid Insights revealed that 69 percent of brides want their wedding to feel fun, 45 percent want it to feel elegant, and 21 percent want it to feel modern. Sound like you? Here are three ensembles to ensure your day reflects the vibe you crave.

by **SABRINA JAMES**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KIM KUHN; LOVEISABIGDEAL.COM; ASHLEY KELEMAN (ASHLEYKELEMAN.COM)

the **look**



Easy & ELEGANT

"A COLOR PALETTE IN BLUSH, ROSE AND MIXED METALS IS KEY FOR EASY, CHIC ELEGANCE."

— Vanessa Van Wieren of Alchemy Fine Events, San Diego



1. RINGS Elisa Solomon "Ancienne" diamond engagement ring and band, \$1,670-\$2,840, catbirdnyc.com 2. TOASTING FLUTES Waterford Elegance Champagne Belle Coupe glasses, \$60 for two, bloomingdales.com 3. GOWN Lace and organza strapless cutout "Ainslie" gown, \$2,725, leanimal.etsy.com 4. BOUQUET Rose, anemone, hydrangea and lamb's-ear bouquet, \$200, poppyloveweddings.com 5. NECKLACE Beaded necklace, \$13, hm.com 6. DRESS Blush sequin tea-length dress, \$206, julbyjuliagasins.etsy.com 7. NAIL POLISH Pure Color nail lacquer, \$21, estelauder.com 8. CAKE Pink and gold cake, price on request, cuntrycakeshop.com 9. CONFETTI Tiny pack of confetti, \$8, brit.co 10. EARRINGS Feather earrings, \$20, hm.com 11. SHOE Pelle Moda "Windy" wedge pump, \$150, pellemoda.us

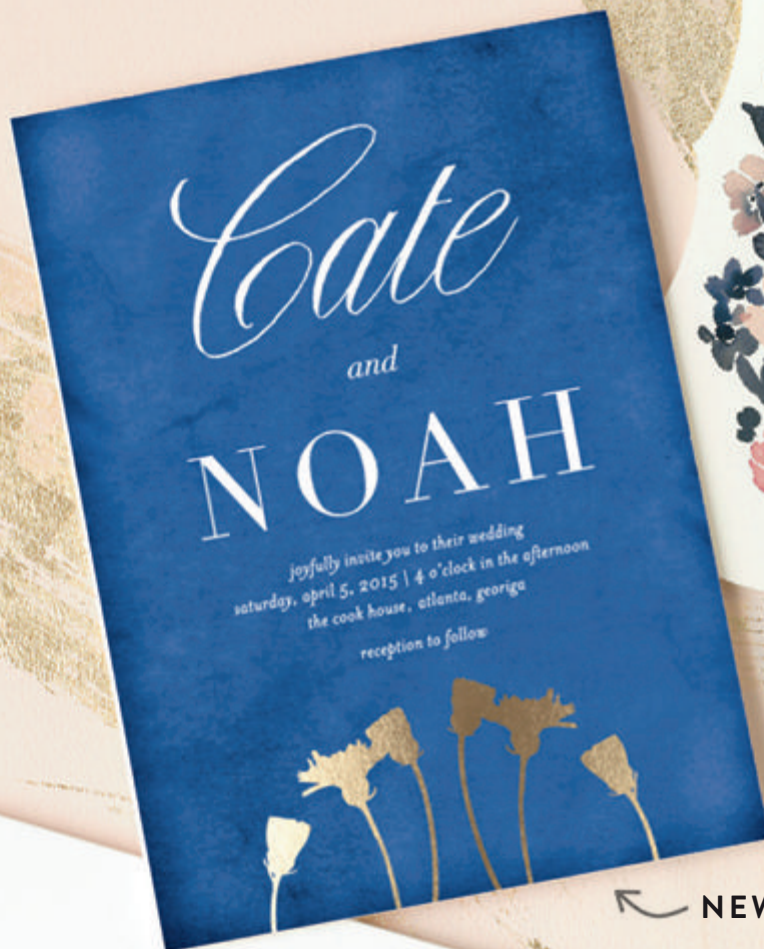
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the**look**

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11

Mega MOD

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— Sarah Pease of Brilliant Event Planning, New York City



1. NECKLACE Blue peacock titanium quartz necklace, \$26, capriciousmisfits.etsy.com 2. HEADBAND Veiled pom headband, \$152, boticca.com 3. GOWN Anne Barge Blue Willow Collection “Jenny” gown, \$3,060, annebarge.com 4. CAKE Colorblocked wedding cake, price on request, akcakedesign.com; Black Tie Affair cake stand, \$95–\$109, shop.sarahsstands.com 5. BOUQUET Paper flower bouquet, price on request, onehappygirl.etsy.com 6. LIP BALM Ardency Inn “Boom Base” lip balm and base, \$24, sephora.com 7. DRESS Red dress, \$15, hm.com 8. BALLOON Giant 36-inch balloon with tassel, \$29, partysparkles.etsy.com 9. SHOE T-strap flats, \$115, saturday.com 10. BRACELET “Strength & Dignity” bangle, \$64, brit.co 11. NAIL POLISH Ciate mini paint pot nail polish in Mistress, \$8, sephora.com

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"A RELAXED VIBE IS PERFECT FOR A DIY BRIDE AND MAKES FOR A PRETTY PARTY."

— Lisa Stoner of E Events Design, Orlando



1. MARQUEE LIGHT 12-inch vintage marquee letter, \$99, junkartgypsys.etsy.com 2. GOWN Ark & Co maxi dress, \$74, lulus.com 3. RING Neon yellow "Louvre" ring, \$78, isharya.com 4. CAKE TOPPER "Yay" cake topper, \$22, babasouk.ca 5. EARRINGS "Sabine" earrings in Midnight, \$44, emmastine.com 6. NECKLACE Upadhy rope necklace, \$253, noirmc.com 7. DRESS "Forest Fairy" chiffon dress, \$74, lilyboutique.com 8. CENTERPIECE Shabby chic Mason jars, \$21 for three, beachblues.etsy.com 9. SHOE BC Footwear "On A Roll" shoes, \$70, piperlime.com 10. NAIL POLISH Obsessive Compulsive Cosmetics nail polish in Something, \$10, occmakeup.com 11. HEADBAND Floral rosette statement headband, \$19, fitzberries.etsy.com 12. TOASTING FLUTE Nason Moretti "Guepiere" champagne flute, \$128, barneys.com

BRIDE AND BRIDESMAIDS: DANIELLE POFF (DANIELLEPOFF.COM)



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SAY THANKS, *GRACIAS* OR *GRAZIE*
WITH LOCALLY INSPIRED GIFTS.

DO ME *a* FAVOR

by HOLLY V. KAPHERR

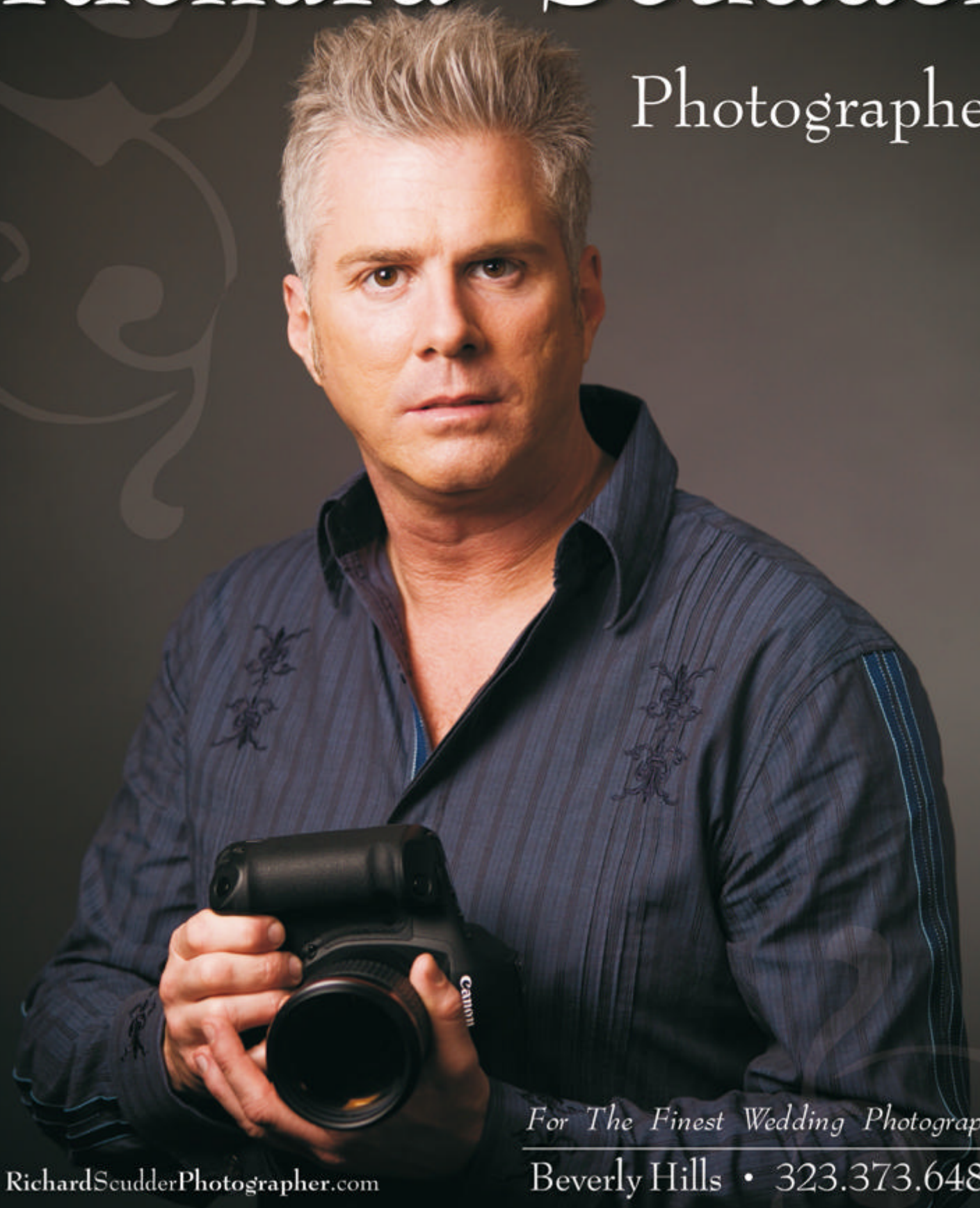


CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: 1. Santorini blue-hued tambourines printed with your wedding date are the perfect addition to a post-ceremony street parade in the Greek isles. 2. At this **SONOMA COUNTY** soiree, centerpieces full of herbs like chamomile, along with cute robot tea infusers, encouraged guests to pluck leaves for their morning cuppa. 3. Weddings away are often held in steamy settings, so a cooling fan is an appreciated token. 4. Tiny bottles of the classic Cholula hot sauce spice up any fiesta. 5. Heading South for your sweetest day? Personalized Mason jars hold signature bourbon cocktails like no other. 6. Mini potted succulents just make sense if you're marrying in the desert, such as Palm Springs, Sedona or Santa Fe. 7. Olive oil is a tasty memory these guests at an **ITALY** *celebrazione* can experience again and again. 8. Pretty parasols provided guests with sweet shade at this **HAWAII** ceremony.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: OUR LABOR OF LOVE AND MAX WANGER; JERRY YOON PHOTOGRAPHERS; MATT MILLER/DIAMOND EYES (WEAREDIAMONDEYES.COM); LOVEISA BIGREAL.COM; SPENCER COMBS PHOTOGRAPHY; EVANTIDE PHOTOGRAPHY; ALISON CONKLIN; JAMES RUBIO PHOTOGRAPHY

Richard Scudder

Photographer



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SURE FOOTING

on the shore

STRUT DOWN YOUR SANDY AISLE IN CUTE FLATS THAT WON'T GIVE YOU THAT "SINKING" FEELING.

FROM TOP: 1. Bella Belle "Something Blue" jeweled wedding sandals with blue soles, \$129, bellabelleshoe.etsy.com 2. Iylia "Brigitte" ballet flat in Blush, \$298, iylia.com 3. Rhinestone mesh sandal, \$30, davidsbridal.com 4. Satin peep-toe bridal ballet flats in Oyster, \$32, detsy.com 5. Stuart Weitzman "Sparta" sandal in Pearl-washed Nappa, \$495, stuartweitzman.com 6. "Shall We Dance?" flat in Sand, \$50, modcloth.com 7. Dr. Scholl's Original Exercise Sandal with Sportie LA, \$88, sportiela.com

by HOLLY V. KAPHERR

Find Florida's best getaways in *Florida Travel + Life's Ultimate Weekends*.

With sections for every passion (beach, adventure, food, family, road trips, and more), and travel itineraries filled with detailed maps and local insider tips, **Ultimate Weekends** is a one-stop planning guide.



Accessible via the *Islands Magazine* app.

Search "Islands Magazine" in the App Store.





CALIFORNIA

BET THE Ranch

GRACE AND RYAN MAKE MUSIC AT A REMOTE NAPA VALLEY VENUE.

photography by **SAMM BLAKE**

“Ryan and I are originally from the Los Angeles area but love the wine country, so we opted for Napa Valley and settled on **Durham Ranch** — 30 minutes from the nearest town of St. Helena — for our wedding because of its intimacy and the beauty of its grounds, which comprise a modern cottage and barn.

I enlisted the help of Suzy Berberian of **Suzy Berberian Weddings & Events**, who was amazing. Ryan’s parents, Greg and Nola Casserly, were also hugely helpful.

The day before our June 1, 2014, event, our 125 guests gathered in St. Helena’s Grace Episcopal Church for a welcome recital. We both studied music, as have many of our friends and family, so we invited everyone to share and perform. I accompanied Ryan as he sang, and we had a tremendous variety of piano, violin and guitar.

The outdoor wedding ceremony honored both of our cultural traditions: We thanked our parents in a tea ceremony, a dear friend read a Rumi love poem, and Ryan’s sister sang. From there, we moved to the barn for the reception, where my parents surprised us with a speech — my mother spoke in Mandarin, and my father translated in English. I was deeply touched.

Following a family-style feast from **Paula LeDuc Catering** including dim sum and wild salmon, we hit the dance floor to the beats of **DJ Dave Tutton**. When the party was over, guests held LED sparklers and formed two lines to make a tunnel of light, and we exited the best night of our lives.” — *Grace Casserly, as told to Katie Morell*



1. DANCE The first-dance song was “This Guy’s in Love with You” by Herb Alpert. **2. CAKE** Model Bakery made the couple’s buttermilk cake with mixed berries and lemon curd. **3. DRINKS** Signature cocktails consisted of cucumber, lime and tequila. **4. CEREMONY** Bruce Van Blair, Ryan’s childhood reverend, officiated the service on a driftwood platform. **5. DETAILS** Ryan’s mother etched the couple’s name and wedding date into a piece of local wood. **6. TUNES** Musicians from Wine Country Entertainment serenaded guests at a farewell brunch. **7. RECEPTION** String lights set the mood at the barn reception. **8. WHEELS** The couple arrived to their farewell brunch in Ryan’s father’s remodeled vintage VW van, the “Love Loaf.”





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7



8

MEXICO

PRIVATE *Party*

CALIFORNIANS JESSIE AND SEAN SEND GUESTS TO A SECRET LOCATION FOR THEIR BEACHFRONT VOWS.

photography by FIGLEWICZ PHOTOGRAPHY

“After Sean proposed, we looked to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Our friends were married there, and everyone said it was the best wedding they had ever attended. Plus, living in Southern California, we love the beach. Our friends referred us to their planner, **The Dazzling Details**, and during a scouting visit, we fell in love with **Villa Romance**, a private oceanfront residence in Punta Mita.

Our 100 guests started to arrive the Tuesday before our Saturday wedding. We stayed at the **Villa La Estancia** resort in Puerto Vallarta, where we hung out by the pool together every day. I have family in Germany, and Sean’s family is from the East Coast, so since everyone had to travel, we wanted them to be able to explore and have their own vacation too.

On March 15, 2014, we shuttled everyone 45 minutes north to the private Punta Mita neighborhood. We had kept the exact location of our wedding completely secret; we didn’t even tell our parents! I loved hearing everyone try to guess where they were going. They were totally surprised and loved the intimacy of the villa.

We were married just before sunset on the beach. **Los Aventuras** mariachi band performed during cocktail hour, then we dined outside in the enclosed courtyard and garden. After a night of dancing and tequila drinking, the **Tacos Saguayo** truck arrived with snacks.

It was great having our entire support system in the same place for days. By the time Saturday arrived, I was like, ‘Oh yeah, we have to get married!’” — *Jessie Shannon, as told to Amy Cassell*



9

1. LOCALE Jessie, in Reem Acra, posed with her new husband on Villa Romance’s private beach. **2. FIRST DANCE** Guests held sparklers while the couple danced to Brad Paisley. **3. CARDS** Escort cards hung on a clothesline. **4. DECOR** Lounge furniture was set up throughout the garden. **5. FLOWER GIRLS** Children Jessie has nannied, including Ava and Maeve, shown, were in the wedding party. **6. DINNER** White roses and candles decorated family-style tables. **7. CEREMONY** Sean’s dad, Michael, officiated, and the couple wrote their own vows. **8. DETAILS** The tiny clover on Sean’s napkin honored his Irish heritage. **9. WEDDING PARTY** Bridesmaids wore Kirstie Kelly Couture; groomsmen, Evolution of Style.



1



2



3



4



5

1. LOCALE "It felt like we were at a cast photo shoot for *Lost*," Liane says of the grounds of Queen Emma Summer Palace. The wedding party wore leis from Lin's Lei Shop. **2. GOWN** Liane found her 1920s wedding dress at Toadstool Farm Vintage in Burbank, California. **3. CAKE** Zebras, the couple's pet name for each other, topped the cake from Tiers of Joy. **4. ACCESSORIES** The bride wore a kimono while prepping for the big day. **5. GUEST BOOK** Guests wrote messages for the couple on vintage postcards. **6. FLOWERS** The bride designed her own bouquet using roses, rice flower, tulips and carnations. **7. DECOR** Family members helped fold and string 1,000 origami cranes. **8. INVITATIONS** The groom designed the bright, tropical stationery.



6



7

HAWAII ROYAL *Hawaiian*

LIANE AND ROBERT CROSS THE PACIFIC FOR AN OAHU WEDDING FIT FOR A QUEEN.

photography by **MELANIE SHELTON FOR ALDERS PHOTOGRAPHY**

“We live in Los Angeles, where there are lots of great wedding locales, but I always knew I wanted to get married in Hawaii. That’s where I grew up, and I wanted to show Robert where I come from. Hawaii is such a beautiful place, but more importantly, it’s a place I feel connected to. I love the laid-back lifestyle, greenery, mountains, ocean and best of all, food!”

My parents, who still live on Oahu, helped us scout locations for our March 8, 2014, wedding. They sent pictures and video of **Queen Emma Summer Palace** in the Nuuanu Valley in Honolulu, and we loved what we saw. Not only does the museum have a rich history, but the grounds are breathtaking as well. It was the perfect setting for our 50-person wedding. And they allowed me to bring in **Tanioka’s** for a traditional Hawaiian dinner of *pupus* (appetizers), kalua pork and lomi salmon.

Guests found plenty to do on the island. Our friends and family, who stayed at a variety of hotels and rental properties, especially loved hanging out on **Kailua’s** popular beaches.

On the big day, my bridesmaids and I got ready at the **Coconut Waikiki Hotel** before heading to the palace. When we arrived, it was raining, so we moved the ceremony indoors. After, we enjoyed delicious Hawaiian food and danced. We played traditional songs from Azerbaijan, where Robert grew up, and from my Okinawan heritage. Interestingly, the dances were pretty similar — and a lot of fun!” — *Liane Lanford, as told to Allyson Reedy*



8



SARAH PEREZ
SARAH PEREZ PHOTOGRAPHY
OPPOSITE: GREER GATTUSO
PHOTOGRAPHY

WHETHER YOU'VE GOT THREE MONTHS OR A YEAR TO PULL OFF A PARTY, MARRYING AWAY IS DOABLE. "ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE IN ANY TIME SPAN," ASSURES CRYSTAL FOLZ, WEDDING COORDINATOR AT ONE&ONLY OCEAN CLUB IN THE BAHAMAS. HERE'S HOW.

By Brooke Showell



Plan Your Destination Wedding in Any Time Frame



ninety days

If spending more than a season planning the big day sounds daunting (or you know you'll change your mind about cake flavors a hundred times), streamlining the process to three months reduces the guesswork. Even better: It can go off without a hitch. "One of the best weddings I've ever planned was completely fast-track and was chock-full of details," says event planner Jung Lee of Fete.



0
DAYS

15
DAYS

30
DAYS

45
DAYS



PICK A LOCATION

A highly organized, responsive and experienced venue will be most equipped to handle your group. Book it within the first week or so, so you can send out invitations quickly, advises planner Lindsay Longacre of LVL Events. The upside is that you'll have a little more buying power among sites with short-notice openings. If the locale you really love is already reserved, be flexible with the timing — consider a Friday or Sunday ceremony as an alternative.

spread the word

Send digital save-the-dates as soon as the date and venue are booked. Formal engraved invites might take too long, so look to printing services like Minted or Wedding Paper Divas that can turn around pre-designed wedding suites within a few days (and also offer services like addressing envelopes to save you time). Ask guests to RSVP one month before the big day.



PRIORITIZE THE DETAILS

While there's some time to personalize decor, keep in mind that in more remote locations, you might have to compromise on a few details.

"I always tell couples to remember we're on an island; everything is being flown or shipped in," says Shameka Simmons, wedding planner at Grace Bay Club in Turks and Caicos. Stick to local flowers if possible, and concentrate only on what's most important to you, whether it's food, photography or music — a resort's preferred-vendor list will be invaluable for making fast decisions.



organize the journey

As attendees focus on getting themselves there, think about how to simplify their travels. "You can't expect guests to be the travel agent and figure all this out — you are more responsible for them than with a hometown wedding," Lee says. Help arrange airport transfers for guests, and send out a reminder checklist of everything they'll need, from passports to sunscreen.

60
DAYS

75
DAYS

90
DAYS

PLAN GROUP ACTIVITIES

Anticipate that about 50 percent of invitees (typically about 40 to 80 people) will attend — and guests could choose to stay from three to five days, so you'll want to keep them entertained. "Plan one activity per day ahead of time for your party — a nice boat trip or island hopping," Simmons suggests.



FIND THE DRESS

If going the custom route, ask upfront which designers can create a dress in four weeks or less — you'll want a delivery date two months before the wedding so you'll have time for any adjustments. Focus on lighter fabrics and simpler designs that have a better chance of a quick turnaround, says Terry Hall, fashion director of New York City bridal retailer Kleinfeld.



PLANNING EXPRESS

A destination wedding in just one month? Not a problem — if you leave it to the pros.

1

DETERMINE THE GUEST LIST

Weddings with a fast turnaround tend to be smaller: no more than about 40 people.

2

PICK A LOCATION

Focus on resorts you've seen before and loved, or ones that come highly recommended. And stay flexible: If you have your heart set on a certain gazebo, keep in mind it might not be available in such a short time frame.

3

HIRE A PLANNER

An expert can guide you toward preferred local vendors, determine logistics, get all the necessary paperwork in order, and help you make lightning-quick decisions.

4

GET YOUR GUESTS THERE

Make guests' journey as accessible and affordable as you can. "Direct flights are always the best whenever possible," says Lee. "If you have an awesome hotel wedding package, but rooms are \$500 per night, no one will be able to come."

5

BUY THE DRESS

The best bet: an off-the-rack sample wedding dress. Or try a department store, vintage shop or favorite boutique. Even in a time crunch, a good tailor can make any dress look like it was made just for you.

6

SPREAD THE WORD

Forget an engraved wedding suite, and instead pick up the phone to let guests know your plans ASAP. Set the RSVP deadline two weeks prior.

One hundred eighty days

Six months equals a more traditional wedding time line, though the time does fly, so you'll want to stay on track with nailing down the details. For some, it's the perfect balance. "Six months is ideal to me — you plan it and you get it done," says Amy Abbott of Amy Abbott Events.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CHRISTIE PHAM PHOTOGRAPHY; AFTERGLOW WEDDINGS (AFTERGLOWIMAGES.CA); KT MERRY; JILLIAN MITCHELL; BLOOMING ANTLERS PHOTO SAVE THE DATE; PHOTO BY ALISSA SAYLOR (ALISSASAYLORPHOTOGRAPHY.COM); DESIGN BY LOVE VS. DESIGN (LOVEDSIGN.COM); JILLIAN MITCHELL; A BRIT & A BLONDE; PHOTO BY KRISTEN BOOTH (KRISTENBOOTH.NET); DESIGN BY LAUREN SHARON (LAURENSHARON.COM)

0
DAYS

30
DAYS

60
DAYS

90
DAYS



EXPLORE VENUE OPTIONS

With half a year to plan, there's a bit more time to mull over the options. Make sure the locale is a good fit for your group. "First, figure out who will be at the wedding," Lee advises. For example, grandma may have a hard time walking around a hilltop village. And with an in-demand locale during peak season — think the U.S. Virgin Islands in January or Capri in July — there's a greater sense of urgency. Also, a nontraditional venue, like a villa where everything needs to be custom-planned, requires more time to arrange the logistics.

schedule a site visit

While you'll rely heavily on phone and email communication, if time and budget allow, plan a trip to tour the property, meet with vendors, schedule tastings and maybe even preview a mock table setup.





PLAN PREWEDDING AND POSTWEDDING PARTIES

The best part of a destination wedding is you have multiple days to celebrate. Once you've squared away the main event, think about what type of gathering to throw in the days leading up to the I do's — a barbecue on the beach, an all-white cocktail party or a sunset cruise.

find the dress

"You have a lot of options if you're six months out," Hall says. Even so, once you know the destination, climate and wedding date, get moving on a decision. Most designers can turn around an order within four months; then the dress is typically scheduled to come in two months prior to the event to make sure it's exactly what the bride wants.



120
DAYS

150
DAYS

180
DAYS

TWEAK THE DETAILS

With six months, you have time not only to settle the "needs" but also incorporate a few creative "wants," such as a dramatic lighting scheme. Look into any local cultural traditions to share, whether it's a fire dancer or tequila burro. "A lot of couples this year have done theme weddings," Simmons adds.

spread the word

Send save-the-date cards as soon as possible so guests can begin to book travel — you might want to order invitations at the same time, so they'll be ready to mail about 10 weeks before the wedding date.



GIVE A WARM WELCOME

To make attendees feel even more in the mood, stock their rooms with a welcome basket containing bottled water, a handwritten note, maps, suggestions for local things to do and a reminder of the weekend's events.



three hundred sixty days

According to data from Wedding Paper Divas, 27 percent of couples take a year to plan. This more leisurely time frame lets you enjoy each step of the process — just don't let the to-do list take over.



RESEARCH LOCATIONS

When the world is your oyster, it can be hard to narrow down the options. Lee suggests starting with the feeling you desire (black-tie ballroom, casual beach), how far away you want to be, and the weather during that time of year; then look for places that fit your aesthetic. Remember that the most popular or remote locations could still be booked one or even two years in advance. Says Longacre, “My experience with Hawaii has been, the sooner you book the venue, the better. With small island locations, there’s not as much to choose from.”



0
DAYS

60
DAYS

120
DAYS

180
DAYS

spread the word

Design a wedding website to inform guests of travel details, hotels and attractions. Send save-the-dates as soon as you finalize the venue and guest list, and include your website address. Order invites three to five months before the big day.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NICOLE LENNOX (2); ERICA CAMILLE PHOTOGRAPHY; JULIAN MITCHELL; VINE & LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY (VINEANDLIGHT.COM); TWAID DOUGHERTY (TWAIDDOUGHERTY.COM)

FIND THE DRESS

With a year, the sky's the limit, as the bride has time to find just the right silhouette, fabric, neckline and color. Aim to make the final decision no more than 10 months out, Hall advises. Keep in mind that something that seems simple (like changing the beading) could take two months, especially if the dress is coming from a country overseas that has a different work or holiday schedule.



(OR TWO)

To eliminate any doubts, Lee suggests two prewedding trips: one to confirm the location and check out local vendors and a second to finalize details. If planning a ceremony on the beach at 5 p.m., go to that exact spot at the designated time to see if the sun is too strong or the ocean is too loud when you say your vows. "You don't want any surprises, especially for the couple planning for a year," Lee says. Talk to locals who might have recommendations for where to get the best coffee for welcome bags, or a favorite restaurant for the rehearsal dinner.

240
DAYS

300
DAYS

360
DAYS

select vendors

With a little foresight, you're not limited to the talent at your destination. If you're not convinced of the local DJ options, for instance, consider hiring someone who can travel.



WHERE IN THE WORLD

Follow these tips to choose the best destination to match your timetable.

30 DAYS

A location that does a lot of destination weddings will be accustomed to a quick turnaround — think places with direct flights, plenty of hotel options, easy access to vendors and relaxed marriage requirements like Las Vegas, Hawaii, parts of Mexico like Cancun and Puerto Vallarta, and popular Caribbean spots like Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica. "These locations have developed very streamlined processes that allow you to just pick and choose from packages," says event planner Beth Helmstetter.

90 DAYS

Depending on where most of your guests are coming from, Mexico, Hawaii and the Caribbean could be easy options — or explore the many possibilities in the continental United States. Look to wedding-ready cities that have gateway airports, such as Miami, New Orleans and Charleston, South Carolina, in the east, and western hubs like Phoenix and San Diego.

180 DAYS

With six months, "You could go as far as you like and should be able to fully customize each detail of your day," Helmstetter says. Options include harder-to-reach tropical locales like Saint Lucia and Tobago, European hot spots like Greece and Ireland (especially in the off-season when there's more availability) and popular stateside destinations like Maine in summertime or Northern California during harvest season.

360 DAYS

Anything goes! Helmstetter suggests "quaint, off-the-beaten-path locations in Italy, hidden villas in Costa Rica or private islands in Fiji."

THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI'S FAMOUS OVERWATER BUNGALOWS OCCUPY DESTINATIONS. HERE ARE 12 RESORT FAVORITES, PLUS 15 MORE SPOTS THE

OVER [BUNGA-LOWDOWN] WATER

photography by JON WHITTLE & KIM KUHN
story by ADAM MCCULLOCH

IN THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI, YOU'LL FIND THE MOST luxurious, secluded and exclusive resorts on the small island *motus* surrounding Bora Bora, where they hold front-row seats to spectacular sunsets over Mount Otemanu, along with private access to the underwater world of the lagoons. But Bora Bora isn't the only game in town: Savvy travelers know that good deals can be found on the island of Tahiti itself or on nearby Moorea, a lively heart-shaped isle just a 10-minute flight or 90-minute ferry transfer from Papeete, Tahiti's capital. Read on for our guide to the archipelago's best retreats in a range of prices.

A UNIQUE POSITION IN THE FIRMAMENT OF HEAVENLY HONEYMOON
WORLD OVER THAT FLAUNT SERIOUS OVERWATER NIRVANA.



PHOTO BY JON WHITTLE, ASSISTED BY DONALD BAESSLER, HAIR & MAKEUP BY AURÉLIE CARON - BRIDAL BEAUTY, ON HER: LOLLISWIMWEAR (LOLLELLO.COM), REGALITO TOP STYLE V003 (\$99), A MAÏTE BOTTOMS STYLE V003 (\$99), ON HIM: VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU), JET BLACK SHORTS SNAPLOCK STYLE (\$99), OPPOSITE: PHOTO BY KIM KUHN, ASSISTED BY DONALD BAESSLER, ON HER: ISLE BY MELIS KOZAN (ISLEBYMELISKOZAN.COM), STRIPES & WINDOWS TOP STYLE 421-040 (\$99), ON HIM: VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU), GUAVO SHORTS SNAPLOCK STYLE (\$99)

All you'll really need to pack for your
Tahitian honeymoon is a bathing
suit and your honey. OPPOSITE:
Sunbathe, sip champagne, dive
into the lagoon, snuggle, repeat at
InterContinental Bora Bora Resort.

OVER BUNGA-LOWDOWN WATER

TAHITI

Called the Queen of the Pacific because of its crown of green mountain peaks, the main island of Tahiti is home to just 173,000 lucky people and is full of markets, nightlife and, of course, stellar resorts.

INTERCONTINENTAL TAHITI RESORT & SPA ➤ Just a couple of miles from the international airport in Papeete, this resort still sports six overwater motu bungalows and 14 overwater lagoon bungalows, with a price tag that leaves room for lobster picnics and champagne. Check in to the romantic Villa Motu Junior Suite with its expansive terrace, swimming platform and views of Moorea. Honeymooning guests are treated especially well the longer they stay: a welcome gift on day one, a half-bottle of French Champagne on day three, and breakfast delivered to your room on day five; lovebirds staying seven nights are hosted for dinner at Le Lotus restaurant. *From \$560 per night.*

LE MERIDIEN TAHITI ➤ This resort may be situated just eight miles from the airport, but it offers a romantic experience *par excellence*, with half of its spacious overwater bungalows facing Moorea and half facing the ocean. Expect canopied beds, woven-palm walls and large terraces with private access to the lagoon and coral reef. Reserve a suite at the end of the pontoon for greater privacy and sunset views over Moorea. If you can tear yourselves away from your bungalow, relax under a coconut palm by the South Pacific's largest sand-bottom swimming pool. *From \$930 per night.*

MOOREA

Just a few minutes from Papeete by boat or air, Moorea's 50 square miles, surrounded by azure lagoon, offer seclusion without sacrificing the comforts of civilization.

CLUB BALI HAI ➤ If you've got your hearts set on a quintessential Tahitian honeymoon (who doesn't?) but balk at the top-shelf room rates, this laid-back, family-run resort might fit your bill. The overwater bungalows here offer some of the best value in French Polynesia — and lagoon access, crystal-clear water and gorgeous vistas steal the spotlight. Social butterflies will also love the fun weekly resort activities, which include Polynesian dance shows and seafood beach barbecues. *From \$270 per night.*

MOOREA PEARL RESORT & SPA ➤ The 28 overwater bungalows here sport all the honeymoon must-haves: glass floors, spacious



TOP ROW, FROM LEFT: Walk the plank at InterContinental Bora Bora Resort. Break from snorkeling with a Lagoon Service picnic. Canoe near Mount Otemanu at InterContinental Bora Bora Resort. MIDDLE ROW, FROM LEFT: Pool or lagoon: your choice. The overwater villas at Le Tahaa Island Resort. A bathtub with a view at Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora. BOTTOM ROW, FROM LEFT: A private moment on a motu picnic. Glass floor panes at Le Meridien Tahiti. Sunset smooches on Bora Bora.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTO BY JON WHITTLE, ON HER: LOLLISWIMWEAR (LOVELOLLI.COM), PALOMA TOP STYLE V002 (\$99); PHOTO BY JON WHITTLE, ON HER: FRANKIE'S BIKINIS (STORE.FRANKIESBIKINIS.COM), AVALON STYLE TOP (\$83), ON HIM: VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU), WATERMELON SHORTS CORE RANGE STYLE (\$89); BARBARA KRAFT; PHOTO BY JON WHITTLE, HAIR & MAKEUP BY AUBRIE CARON - BRIDAL BEAUTY, ON HER: LOLLISWIMWEAR (LOVELOLLI.COM), REGALITO TOP STYLE V026 (\$99), AMANTE BOTTOMS STYLE V003 (\$99), ON HIM: VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU), JET BLACK SHORTS SNAPLOCK STYLE (\$99); JON WHITTLE, COURTESY LETAHAA; OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: PHOTO BY JON WHITTLE, ON HER: GALLE DRESS (GALLEE ON FACEBOOK), LACE AND SILK BORA DRESS (\$380), ON HIM: PERRY ELLIS (PERRYELLIS.COM) SHORT SLEEVE SLIM MULTI PRINT SHIRT (\$65), VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU) FEDEX SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU) CORE RANGE (\$89); TREY RATCHER AND STUCKERSTOCKS.COM; PHOTO BY JON WHITTLE, ON HER: LOLLISWIMWEAR (LOVELOLLI.COM), STRIPES & WINDOWS TOP STYLE V27-V30 (\$98), ON HIM: VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU), WATERMELON SHORTS CORE RANGE STYLE (\$89)

OVER BUNGA-LOWDOWN WATER



Taking it all in at Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora. OPPOSITE: You're hitched, on your insane honeymoon in Bora Bora, staying in an overwater bungalow: bragging rights forever.

private decks and unobstructed views of the blue lagoon. Standard bungalows face the resort beach, while premium-category villas overlook the ocean and are closest to the reef. The resort's coral-regeneration project is bringing new life to the local waters, so rent scuba gear from the resort's dive center to explore. Choose a traditional French Polynesian tribal pattern at the onsite tattoo parlor for a lasting memory of your 'moon. *From \$585 per night.*

SOFITEL MOOREA IA ORA BEACH RESORT ➡➡ Affordability is relative in the Islands of Tahiti, but this resort's 39 air-conditioned overwater bungalows offer A-List style at a conservative price point. Two categories of overwater bungalow feature glass floor panels for viewing wildlife under the water, private terraces and rain showers, along with that crucial personal access to the lagoon. Sign up for the Discover Magnifique Romance package and receive champagne, chocolate or flowers on arrival, breakfast served in your room daily, and super-late checkout, so there's no rush to make your exit. *From \$820 per night.*

HILTON MOOREA LAGOON RESORT AND SPA ➡➡ Make like *Rules of Engagement* actress Sara Rue and her husband Kevin Price and park yourselves at the only five-star resort on Moorea, where bungalows boast 180-degree views of the 10-acre lagoon. For the best vistas of all, reserve the Horizon Bungalow, located at the end of the pontoon. Earn extra romance points by booking a beach dinner à deux under the stars, where traditional dancers will entertain you. *From \$890 per night.*

BORA BORA

Regarded as the world's most romantic island, Bora Bora is surrounded by motus — small isles with perfect palms and white sand — primed for a rendezvous on your own private strand.

SOFITEL BORA BORA PRIVATE ISLAND ➡➡ Situated on its own lush islet in Bora Bora, this casual-chic resort offers 20 overwater bungalows, each with partial glass floors, an outdoor shower and a never-ending minibar. (Snag a suite at either the western or eastern end of the pontoon for superior privacy and the finest sunset and sunrise views.) Zen out each morning with yoga on the beach, or chill with your paramour at the spa, which features open-air massages. Book the Magnifique Romance package, which includes a bottle of champagne, chocolates or flowers on arrival, daily in-room breakfast and late checkout. *From \$775 per night.*

FOUR SEASONS RESORT BORA BORA ➡➡ With 100 overwater bungalows measuring over 1,100 square feet each (15 of which sport a private plunge pool), Four Seasons Bora Bora consistently makes guests feel like they're on their own private isle. The thatched two-bedroom Herenui suites (meaning "big love" in Tahitian) are especially honeymoon-worthy, with expansive decks each kitted out with chaise longues, an infinity pool, an outdoor shower, a dining area and that most Tahitian of perks: direct ladder access



PHOTO BY KIM KUHN, ASSISTED BY DONALD BAESSLER, ON HIM: VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU), WATERMELON SHORTS (CERAMICSTYLE.COM), ON HER: ISLE BY HELIS KOZAN (ISLEBYHELISKOZAN.COM), CASABLANCA DRESS (425-6688) (100); OPPOSITE: PHOTO BY JON WHITTLE, ON HIM: VENROY BOARD SHORTS (VENROY.COM.AU), GUANO SHORTS (SNAPLOCK.COM), ON HER: FRANKIE'S BIKINIS (STORE.FRANKIESBIKINIS.COM), FRANKIE'S STYLE TOP (\$84) AND BOTTOM (\$84)

to the lagoon. Another only-in-Tahiti treat: Breakfast is served via ceremonial Polynesian canoe straight to your overwater bungalow — and while the meal is being prepared, a hunky rower will give you a tour around the pontoons. *From \$1,040 per night.*

INTERCONTINENTAL BORA BORA RESORT & THALASSO SPA

➔ Located on the eastern side of Bora Bora on Motu Piti Aau (“two hearts” in Tahitian), this luxe hideaway is renowned for killer sunset views from the 80 bungalows hovering over the lagoon. Each villa has a split-level terrace and sun deck for easy access to turquoise waters. The Thalasso spa, powered by a pipe that extends 3,000 feet into the ocean, uses the mineral-rich waters in hydrotherapy treatments. Book a couples sesh in the glass-floored spa suite, and make fish faces at passing marine life while enjoying an aromatherapy bath, massage and bubbly. *From \$1,550 per night.*

THE ST. REGIS BORA BORA RESORT ➔ Of all the blue-chip properties in Bora Bora, this celeb magnet (the comedy *Couples Retreat*, starring Vince Vaughn, was filmed here) offers perhaps the most Instagram-worthy views. Five categories of overwater bungalows include draws like spacious outdoor terraces, Italian-marble bathrooms with sunken tubs, and large glass panels in the floor for major fish-viewing potential. Splurge on a Premium Overwater Villa, which also flaunts a capacious whirlpool tub on the sunset deck. At the Lagoon by Jean-Georges restaurant, feast on fresh-caught Tahitian seafood like black-pepper shrimp with sun-dried pineapple. *From \$2,750 per night.*

HIDDEN GEMS

Eleven lesser-known Tahitian islands also vie for romance seekers. Get a taste of Rangiroa, the world's second-largest atoll, or Tahaa, where clusters of vanilla trees perfume the breeze.

LE TAHAA ISLAND RESORT & SPA, TAHAA ➔ The Vanilla Island is just a stone's throw (well, a 10-minute helicopter ride) from Bora Bora. This eco-resort, where Carrie Underwood and Mike Fisher escaped postwedding, flaunts a floating treetop restaurant as its centerpiece. The Bora Bora suites have views of the namesake island, while the Sunset suites are ideal for a cocktail clink at dusk. Take an outrigger canoe directly from your bungalow to the resort's islet, where you'll be welcomed with champagne, a three-course dinner and a traditional Polynesian fire dance. *From \$920 per night.*

HOTEL KIA ORA RESORT & SPA, RANGIROA ➔ Far from the luxury enclave of Bora Bora but steeped in just as much mystique is a luxury hideaway that caters to adventurous couples. This 60-villa resort is located on Rangiroa, a 55-minute flight from Papeete. Instead of towering volcanic peaks, the atoll offers a vast shallow lagoon, pink-sand beaches, coral walls and waters teeming with marine life — a boon for divers and other wildlife enthusiasts. The 10 overwater bungalows each feature a bath with glass viewing panels around the edges for gazing into the lagoon. *From \$1,130 per night.*

OVER BUNGA-LOWDOWN WATER

Mexico



1 HOTELITO DESCONOCIDO

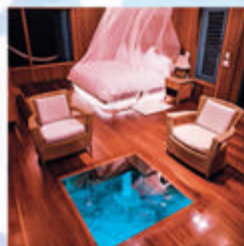
PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO ➔ Find seclusion, simplicity, sustainable practices and no electricity: All 27 *palafito* overwater villas are cooled using solar power. Heat things up with a traditional *temazcal* steam-room treatment. *Palafitos* from \$590; hotelito.com. — Holly V. Kapherr



2 ROSEWOOD MAYAKOBA

PLAYA DEL CARMEN, MEXICO ➔ This exclusive Mexican Caribbean resort offers 18 overwater suites (each with a heated plunge pool) hovering above an emerald lagoon. Ask your butler to arrange a private boat tour for two through the mangroves. *Overwater lagoon suites* from \$700; rosewoodhotels.com. — Maya Vandenberg

Central America



5 CAYO ESPANTO

BELIZE ➔ There's just one overwater bungalow at this private island. Since there's no restaurant and most guests swim in their private plunge pools, the only person you'll see (other than your honey) is your personal houseman. *Overwater bungalow* from \$1,595; aprivateisland.com. — Lori Barbely

6 COCO VIEW RESORT

ROATAN, HONDURAS ➔ For the most privacy at this rustic all-inclusive with 16 overwater casas, opt for a king-size bungalow and laze the day away in a hammock or pair of Adirondack chairs. *Overwater bungalows* from \$1,289 for seven nights; cocoviewresort.com. — MV



7 PUNTA CARACOL ACQUA-LODGE

BOCAS DEL TORO ISLAND, PANAMA ➔ Your suite's master bedroom is on the second floor of each two-story structure, and a large living area on the first floor opens to an expansive deck with uninterrupted vistas. *Honeymoon packages* from \$2,250; puntacaracol.com.pa. — MV

Oceania



3 LIKULIKU LAGOON RESORT

FIJI ➔ At Fiji's only resort with overwater *bures*, each measuring 1,000 square feet, the real-life views don't disappoint. Soak as long as you like in a separate bathing pavilion with lagoon views from your bathtub. *Overwater bures* from \$2,990; likulikulagoon.com. — HVK

4 AITUTAKI LAGOON RESORT

COOK ISLANDS ➔ Aitutaki is home to just one resort with overwater bungalows. Set up shop in a mahogany hut with turndown service, an outdoor shower and a ladder down to the translucent water. *Overwater bungalows* from \$945; aitutakilagoonresort.com. — HVK



Caribbean



8 SANDALS ROYAL CARIBBEAN RESORT & PRIVATE ISLAND

MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA ➔ What will be the Caribbean's most accessible overwater bungalows are set to make their debut this year. Each of the five villas will have glass floors, a double hammock and a private hot tub. *All-inclusive rates* available winter 2015; sandals.com. — MV

GLOBAL

THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI MIGHT HAVE THE MARKET CORNERED ON OVERWATER BUNGALOWS, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU WON'T FIND THEM ELSEWHERE ON EARTH — SOME EVEN CLOSE TO HOME.

GETAWAYS

9

11

12

10

Europe



9 HOTEL PALAFITTE NEUCHÂTEL, SWITZERLAND

➡ Honeymoon wants: overwater bungalow, check. European charm, check. The hotel's "lake pavilions" sit on glassy Neuchâtel Lake looking out to the Swiss Alps. Hit up the restaurant for ultra-modern cuisine like pumpkin "cappuccino." Overwater pavilions from \$400; palafitte.ch. — HVK

Asia



10 COCOA ISLAND BY COMO

➡ The eight overwater Dhoni Suites here look like traditional Maldivian *dhoni* sailboats, but while they appear to be floating, they're actually anchored to the seafloor. Inside, a Balinese daybed, flat-screen TV and private yoga terrace await. *Dhoni Suites* from \$900; como-hotels.com. — HVK

11 SONG SAA PRIVATE ISLAND

CAMBODIA ➡ The islands of Song Saa (Khmer for "the sweethearts") boast not only overwater villas — each with fish-viewing windows and a private infinity pool — but also the resort's Vista restaurant featuring modern Cambodian cuisine. Overwater villas from \$1,650 per couple, all-inclusive; songsaa.com. — HVK



12 PANGKOR LAUT RESORT

LUMUT, MALAYSIA ➡ The 43 overwater villas of this Malaysian private island sit on a pristine strand and turquoise lagoon overlooking the Straits of Malacca. A serious foodie couple's resort, it offers more dining experiences than bungalows. Overwater villas from \$559; pangkorlautresort.com. — HVK

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inside

HOW TO MAKE YOUR GREAT ESCAPE



GROOM'S
GIFT
P69



AVINO
VALLEY
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the *ever after*



Taking a dip in the shadow of Gros Piton at Ladera Resort in Saint Lucia.

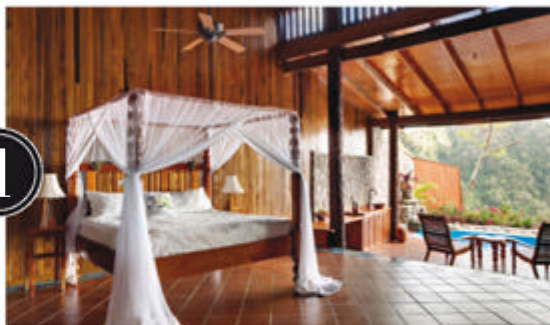
VIEWS WITH A ROOM

At these five hotels, located from the Rocky Mountains to London's historic city center, every room flaunts a million-dollar vista.

by ALLYSON REEDY

LUSH LANDSCAPE

We'll pretty much guarantee you won't mind that your room at **Ladera**, in **Saint Lucia**, is missing a wall. All 37 suites and villas are completely open (yet still oriented for privacy) to screen-saver views of the sparkling Caribbean Sea and verdant Pitons. *From \$1,800 per night.*



1



CENTRAL SPOT

Glamorous, historic and within walking distance of many of the city's landmarks, **The Savoy** is a **London** icon. Look out on the River Thames, Big Ben and the London Eye from many of the 195 guest rooms and 73 Edwardian and art-deco suites. *Rooms from \$550 per night; suites from \$1,935 per night.*

2

WINTER WONDERLAND

Rooms at **Crystal Peak Lodge** in Breckenridge, **Colorado**, face one of two equally scenic directions: toward the slopes or the Rocky Mountains. Nestled at the base of Breckenridge Ski Resort's Peak 7, the lodge also offers convenient ski-in/ski-out access. *From \$349 per night.*



3



ICONIC SKYLINE

Each of the 100 rooms at the **Z NYC Hotel** in Long Island City showcases the Big Apple's postcard skyline via 9-foot floor-to-ceiling windows. A free shuttle into **Manhattan** makes this an affordable NYC option. (Yes, we just used *affordable* and *NYC* in the same sentence.) *From \$225 per night.*

4

WORLD LANDMARK

Set just 650 yards from the Taj Mahal, **Oberoi Amarvilas** in Agra, **India**, boasts an unrivaled location. The best part: Every room is positioned to have an uninterrupted view of the ancient monument, meaning unlimited gawking at the ultimate shrine to love. *From \$905 per night.*



5

ISLAND LUST

WHEN ONE ISLE JUST ISN'T ENOUGH, ISLAND HOP IN THESE SUNNY ARCHIPELAGOS FOR A THREE-IN-ONE HONEYMOON.

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

St. Croix ➔ **St. Thomas** ➔ **St. John**

FLY Delta's new Atlanta-to-St. Croix nonstop flight makes the island more accessible than ever. From here, it's a quick 25-minute seaplane to St. Thomas.

STAY Split your time between **The Buccaneer**, a family-owned pink palace on St. Croix, and **The Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas**, where a couple's massage in the spa gazebo is a breezy treat.

DO Take the ferry from St. Thomas for a day trip of snorkeling and hiking on St. John — two-thirds of the island is protected national parkland.

Total Indulgence



Sweetest Honeymoon

NO MATTER WHERE YOUR TASTES LEAN, THESE COCOA-FILLED HONEYMOONS PROMISE DELICIOUS BLISS FOR TWO.

BY PEGGY SIJSWERDA

FROM TOP: COURTESY LADERA; COURTESY FAIRMONT HOTELS & RESORTS; JESSICA CHRISTIE PHOTOGRAPHY; JENNIFER ALTMAN; COURTESY OBEROI HOTELS & RESORTS; COURTESY ROSAS & COCOLORE BOUTIQUE HOTEL & SPA



The impossibly blue Adriatic Sea borders the Croatian town of Baska on the isle of Krk. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT: A chocolate massage at Rosas & Xocolate.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: DALIBOR BRLEK/ALAMY; COURTESY REACTOR; COURTESY ROSAS & XOCOLATE; BOUTIQUE HOTEL & SPA; COURTESY LA LOMA JUNGLE LODGE; COURTESY BANYAN TREE MAYAKOBA; COURTESY THE LODGE AT CHAA CREEK, BELIZE

HAWAII

Maui ➔ Lanai ➔ Molokai

FLY Most major commercial carriers fly direct to Maui from West Coast cities like Phoenix and San Francisco. Reach neighboring Lanai and Molokai by ferry.

STAY Andaz Maui at Wailea Resort, the island's newest hotel, is all sleek, sexy Hawaii, with cascading pools, crisp white cabanas and direct access to crescent-shaped Mokapu Beach.

DO Picnic on a secluded stretch of sand on Molokai one day. The next, book a Hawaii sea-salt scrub at newly renovated **Four Seasons Resort Hawaii, Lanai at Manele Bay.**

CROATIA

Krk ➔ Cres ➔ Mali Losinj

FLY Land in Zagreb and rent a car. In just over two hours, you'll cross a bridge onto the northern "golden isle" of Krk. Continue to Cres and Mali Losinj by boat or car.

STAY Krk's wine trails and medieval town are easy to explore when home base is **Hotel Marina**, a boutique property with sparkling bay views.

DO Head to Cres by ferry and seek out the pebbly shores of Lubenice Beach. Then drive to pine-scented Mali Losinj for aromatherapy at **Hotel Bellevue's** spa.

— Katarina Kovacevic

Something Blue for Your Boo

*If your groom's got travel fever (and if you're jetting for your I do's, we bet he does), the **Reactor Proton World Time** watch might be the best wedding gift ever. Just twist the bezel to show the time in 11 U.S. and 12 worldwide cities. \$525 to \$650; amazon.com.*

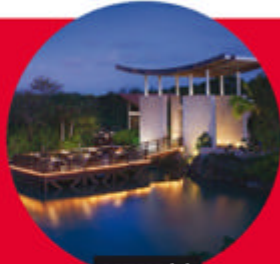
— Holly V. Kapherr



BELIZE

THE LODGE AT CHAA CREEK

Bliss out during five spa treatments created for chocolate lovers with the Chocolatissimo package at this eco-resort. Then dine under the stars on chocolate-inspired dishes like tender steak in cacao butter. *Three-night Chocolatissimo package from \$2,264 per couple.*



MEXICO

BANYAN TREE MAYAKOBA

Book a cacao-honey scrub, then stroll up to La Copa, Banyan Tree's rooftop lounge, for a chocolate-martini aperitif. Back in your villa, flickering candles surround a bubbly sunken bathtub under the stars. Get creative with honey and chocolate body paint. *Villas from \$599 per night.*



PANAMA

LA LOMA JUNGLE LODGE

Here, chocolate is harvested, fermented, roasted, peeled, ground and prepared right on the working cacao farm. Sip chocolate tea made from roasted cacao pods and dive into desserts like flourless chocolate-coconut cake. *Cabins from \$250 per couple per night, including meals.*



MEXICO

ROSAS & XOCOLATE

This design hotel in Merida, on the Yucatan Peninsula, offers the Xocolate Experience, including a three-course chocolate-themed dinner designed for urbanites with a sweet tooth. Five words: Three-hour chocolate couple's massage. *Three-night Xocolate Experience package from \$1,600 per couple.*

the *ever* after

6:30 a.m. VINE-YASA

Salute the sun in at a **Yoga in the Barn** class with veteran hatha instructor Jami Grassi. Her converted farm-shed-studio looks out on serene hills, a bird-filled pond and rolling grapevines, natch.

7:45 a.m. STAY INN

Return to the five-room **Poetry Inn** to make use of that sexy outdoor shower. Order the gourmet three-course breakfast, which includes pastries from famed bakery Bouchon, and enjoy it in front of the fireplace or on the balcony with panoramic views of the Stags Leap District.

A *perfect* DAY IN ... NAPA

Toast your marriage with 24 hours of food, fermentation and fun in California's premier wine region.

by **CARRIE BELL**

9 a.m. HOW BAZAAR

Stroll the aisles at **Oxbow Public Market** for an intro to the area's vast array of artisans. Pick up provisions like cheese, cured meats, jam and artisan chocolates to snack on. Grab edible souvenirs like Marshall's Farm honey, Napa Valley Distillery vodka and Ritual Coffee Roasters beans.

10 a.m. SIP 'N' SPIN

Anyone can drive to the almost 400 wineries in the region; how many visitors call on vintners via bike? Rent wheels, grab a vineyard map, and purchase pickup service at Yountville's **Napa Valley Bike Tours**.

1:45 p.m. LUNCH BUNCH

Before the booze bests you, stop at **Archetype**, a newcomer to Napa's bustling resto scene, for elevated comfort food like tater tots with crème fraîche and caviar. Nom. Then, reward all that peddling with a thick, creamy **Gott's Roadside** shake made with local Three Twins organic ice cream.



2:30 p.m. CHEF SHOP

Wander the epicurean souvenir shop at the **Culinary Institute of America at Greystone**. If you don't have time to watch a cooking demo or tour the historic manse, take a gander at the hundreds of openers in the Corkscrew Museum.

5:30 p.m. BAR, RAISED

Catch sunset from the wraparound deck at **Auberge du Soleil** while savoring sunset-hued signature cocktails flavored with West Coast staples like golden-raisin simple syrup. Takeaway treats (biscotti, pistachio caramels, hazelnut chocolates) are handmade by executive pastry chef Paul Lemieux.

6:30 p.m. LIVE TO EAT

There's no menu at **The Restaurant at Meadowood**, one of only nine U.S. eateries that earned three Michelin stars for 2015. Instead, during reservations, diners are quizzed about gastronomic preferences. Chef Christopher Kostow tailors seasonal and local plates to each patron. Partake in the three-course bar seating, the nine-course tasting menu, or the chef's-counter menu: a sampling of 15 to 20 dishes.

8:30 P.M. LATE-NIGHT LANGUOR

With Spa Solage's Starlight at the Bathhouse package, there's no need to whisper sweet nothings in your inside voice — you've got the place all to your sybaritic selves. Soak in the healing geothermal waters while sipping one of Napa's best sparkling wines.



FROM TOP: Onsite bikes from Solage Calistoga. The Poetry Inn's patio overlooks Napa Valley's rolling hills. Start married life on the right track with a winery tour on wheels. Yoga in the Barn channels zen with grapevine views. Three Twins organic ice cream from Oxbow Market.

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM RIGHT: COURTESY OXBOW PUBLIC MARKET; SHUTTERSTOCK; ADRIAN GREGORUTTI; TRINETTE REED PHOTOGRAPHY; COURTESY POETRY INN; TRINETTE REED PHOTOGRAPHY

VENDOR DIRECTORY

Having a team of professionals ensures your big day is stress-free.



VENDOR LISTING

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HAWAII

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MEXICO

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FLORIST

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First things first: Hire a planner. No matter how organized or detailed you are, a wedding planner will pay for herself – from the money she'll save you by knowing the best vendors to the stress she'll alleviate from day one. Destination planners know the terrain, speak the language and can navigate your locale's culture.

Choosing the right photographer is also key: Once your big day is over, your photos will be the most valued keepsakes to remind you of your experience in paradise.

Here are vendors seasoned in planning from afar – find the right one so you can get hitched without a hitch.

VENDOR TIPS

“Incorporate the natural beauty of the location to enhance your wedding. Don't try to create something that is alien to the destination.”

—MARY BARTOLUCCI,
ISLAND STYLE WEDDINGS

“Get a reputable photographer and videographer to capture moments that fly by!”

—IRENA KORAJKIC,
THE BRIDAL FLOWER

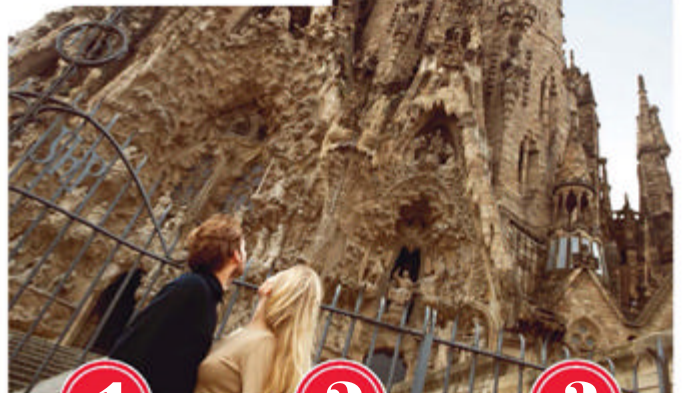
For more vendor information, visit destinationweddingmag.com/wedding-vendors. To advertise, contact Jacki Kendall at Jacki.Kendall@bonniercorp.com.



WILD vs. MILD

BARCELONA

FROM NIGHTLIFE TO ARCHITECTURE, THE CATALAN CAPITAL WILL KEEP YOU BUSY IN A VERY GOOD WAY. *by SARAH SEKULA*



1
WILD

2
WILD

3
WILD

MONTSERRAT

Make your way to the Catalan countryside with Lifestyle Barcelona. At the top of the multi-peaked **Montserrat Mountain** (above, top left), the site of a Benedictine monastery, your guide will pep talk you into stepping over the edge and rappelling down the rugged 4,055-foot cliff. Once you've conquered that, scramble up a sheer rock face (above, bottom left).



EIXAMPLE ESQUERRA

Don your dancing shoes and head to **Mojito Club** to learn salsa moves on the sly (it offers lessons), then cut a rug on the dance floor with the pros. Grease the wheels with a pair of the club's signature mojitos (below).

GRACIA BARRIO

If fancy-shmancy hostels exist, **Generator Barcelona** (above, bottom center) is one of them. Amid the original artwork, stylish eclectic furniture and drool-worthy tapas, you'll swear you were in a boutique hotel. Hit up one of the legendary till-dawn parties featuring hot local DJs, or check out a flamenco show. But be warned: The performers often choose audience members to shake it onstage for prize money.

1
MILD

2
MILD

3
MILD

BOHEMIAN BARCELONA

Take an **art-history stroll** past landmarks that shaped Pablo Picasso's life with BCN Travel's two-hour tour. Stops include Sala Pares and Quatre Gats Cafe (above, top center), where the city's modernists met to discuss and develop their approach to art and architecture. The finale: a guided visit through the 4,000-plus works at the Museu Picasso, Barcelona's most-visited museum.

CITY CENTRE

Make a beeline for the centuries-old **Boqueria market** (above, top right; and below) just off La Rambla, where you can snag the best locally sourced meats, cheeses, juices and breads. After, make your way to mile-long Barceloneta Beach and snag a free slice of sand for a gastronomic safari or romantic picnic. You can't beat the sound of the aqua Mediterranean splashing in the background.

EIXAMPLE ESQUERRA

For immediate Instagram hearts, snap shots of the spellbinding surrealist exterior of Gaudi's **Sagrada Familia** (above, bottom right), under construction for 130 years. Spy stained glass, stonework and epic arches.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MATTHEW ALAMY/ALAMY; SHUTTERSTOCK; FRANK HERHOLD/GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK (2); NIKOLAS KOENIG; CULTURA RF/GETTY IMAGES



Bridal Registries

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secretsresorts.com

Miscellaneous

15. **PADI Tax Refund** - Page 75
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16. **Wynn Las Vegas** - Page 76
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Photography

17. **Richard Scudder Productions** - Page 41
richardscudder.com

Wedding Products

18. **Cubavera** - Page 2-3
cubavera.com/weddings

19. **Minted** - Page 35, 37
minted.com

Wedding Vendors

20. **The Wedding Salon** - Page 32
weddingsalon.com

THE SPOT, THE SHOT

WHERE MANUEL ANTONIO, COSTA RICA WHEN APRIL 5, 5:50 P.M.



SILK ROAD

A glassy coastline and a serene setting reflect this wedding party's personality.

"The wedding party at this Indian event had all been friends for a while before the big day, and after the ceremony, we went down to the beach for a few sunset pictures. It was hot, so everyone was yearning to get their feet wet. As soon as I saw the reflection of the group in the shallows, I wanted to capture that. To add more character to the shot, I asked them to imitate the famous photo of the Beatles crossing Abbey Road. They happily jumped on the idea, and the result really expressed the fun of the day."

story & photography by **NADIA D PHOTOGRAPHY** | NADIADPHOTO.COM

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